

ENDRE SÍK

THE HISTORY  
OF BLACK AFRICA

VOLUME III



AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ · BUDAPEST 1974

Translated by  
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## FOREWORD TO VOLUME III

1. *Semper aliquid novi ex Africa* — "Africa always brings something new"; this two-thousand-year-old Roman proverb proved really truthful in the years of World War II and after. The past thirty years were for Africa a period of at least as decisive changes as the closing years of the 15th century or the incipient 19th century or the last two decades preceding the 20th. The past thirty years formed the prelude to an entirely new period in African history, marked by the emergence of free and independent African states. In contrast with the era of mostly spontaneous movements this was a time of consciously organized national liberation movements. This decisive change took, and is still taking, place gradually, not overnight and not simultaneously, in the different Africa countries. The war years witnessed only the first moves, and this only in some places, while after the war these movements of a new type took a more definite shape, and this also in more and more countries.

The past thirty years brought about significant changes also in the colonial policies of the imperialists. Likewise gradually and not everywhere, but at such times and places and to such an extent as the historical situation — the peoples awakening to consciousness and the shift in the international power relationships — compelled the imperialist powers to make some changes in their policies.

During the war these changes were perceptible only in few places and dimly, but after the war they made themselves felt in more and more places and more and more distinctly. But in contrast with the shift which occurred in the independence struggle of the African peoples and which in the course of the past thirty years at least started in all countries of Africa, there are exceptions among the colonizers (the Portuguese, Spanish and South African imperialists) who, shutting their eyes to the historic changes, stubbornly persist in maintaining the old forms of the discredited colonial system and delude themselves with the hope that they will succeed in what the big colonial powers of the world, the British, French and Italian imperialists, failed to attain, that they will be able to halt the wheels of history.

The war years were in every respect an introduction to the post-war period, in which the twofold political change led to the disintegration of the colonial system. From 1956 onwards the colonies in Black Africa were liberated one after another. In the past fifteen years more than thirty colonies in Black Africa became independent states. An entirely new period opened for them — at different times for the different countries.

But the last chapter, the post-war stage of the history of the African colonies, has not been closed yet. For the still dependent territories the period of disintegration of the colonial system, with old-style imperialist oppression and exploitation, goes



on. But the rest of the way to go to the end is not long. However reluctant the imperialists may be, and whatever they may do, trying hard to change their skins, to prevent their remaining colonies from winning independence, or to delay their deliverance, the colonial system must and will vanish from the world in no long time.

The break-up of the colonial empires, however, means neither the termination of colonial policies nor the end of colonial exploitation. Even after granting formal independence to their colonies, the imperialist powers carry on their colonial policies, though in changed form (neocolonialism). Despite the twofold political change there was no essential shift in the economic field either during or after the war, or ever since that. The point is still the same: in all the remaining colonies and in the overwhelming majority of the liberated countries the imperialists continue to dominate economically, they control all key positions, and imperialist exploitation goes on unhampered. In spite of all, political liberation means a certain change also in the economic field, inasmuch as it offers the opportunity of economic liberation. For the time being, however, few of the liberated countries have grasped this opportunity.

2. When I began working on the third volume of my work, I intended it to contain the history of Black Africa during and after World War II in Part Seven and Part Eight and the first steps of the already liberated young African states in its concluding Part Nine. But history was working faster than the historiographer. From 1960 onwards more and more African colonial territories have won independence, and in the decade that has elapsed since then the life of the African countries, both the independent ones and those still under colonial rule, has been more eventful than it had been during the preceding half-century. I have had to admit that all that cannot be crammed into a single volume.

The history of the newly independent African states is not only richer in events than their colonial past. With accession to independence they have entered a new period of their history, the first stage of which is still running and thus forms part of the current political life of the world.

This consideration has induced me to renounce discussing in the third volume of my book this current stage of the new historical period of the young African states. It is a purpose of this work to give a comprehensive survey of the *history* of Black Africa, that is, the *past* of the countries and peoples of Black Africa. To discuss the present life of independent African states and their role in international politics is not the duty of the historian objectively disclosing and stating the facts, it is rather a job for the politician who deals with the problems of current international politics, and who not only reviews the phenomena and events but also politically evaluates them. When, by finishing the third volume of my work, I shall have fulfilled my duty as a historian of Black Africa, I shall be in a position (my health condition permitting) to accomplish also this political job (in which I have been engaged for many years now).

That is why, changing my original plan, I have decided that the third and fourth volumes should be confined to Part Seven and Part Eight, because the material of the latter had increased many times, and that the history of the first years of independence in so many new independent states should be the subject of a separate political work.

Subsequently I have found it necessary to make still further changes. With the passing of years there has been an unprecedented increase also in the material of Part Eight, especially as regards the territories still under colonial domination (South

Africa,<sup>1</sup> South West Africa, Southern Rhodesia, Angola and the other Portuguese colonies, French Somaliland). I have been compelled to cut in two the material of Part Eight. I have taken as a basis of division the difference in principle that exists between the territories which have in the meantime become independent states and those which are still colonies. The history of the first category up to those countries' accession to independence has been left under Part Eight, which is now entitled "Disintegration of the Colonial System in Black Africa", constituting together with Part Seven the third and fourth volumes of my work, while the fifth volume will contain in Part Nine the history of the still existing colonial entities from the end of World War II up to our days.

The same volume will include also the post-war history of Ethiopia and Liberia until 1960. Namely, the historical fate of these two countries is analogous neither with that of the liberated territories nor with that of the remaining colonies. They became officially independent a long time ago, but as long as they were surrounded on all sides by colonial possessions, they could not really make use of their independence and were entirely at the mercy of the imperialist colonial powers. Their official status did not change after the end of the war either (this was not even necessary), but since a considerable number of African countries became independent states (1960), they have also taken an active part in the fraternal community of African nations and are now marching arm in arm to struggle for the consolidation of their independence and for the liberation of their African brethren still suffering from the colonial yoke.

3. As I stated already in the introduction to the first volume, my work is aimed at "unmasking the monstrous historic crimes (the horrible brutalities, outrageous frauds and unparalleled provocations) committed by world capitalism over long centuries, from the time when it was still in the womb of its mother — feudalism", and to provide thereby "for the peoples of Africa, whether still oppressed and struggling for liberation or already independent, as well as for the world proletariat of our time, a political document, a part of the bill which they will in due time present to

<sup>1</sup> The imperialist powers regard South Africa as a sovereign independent state. Following their example, other states have also adopted this view, and South Africa is thus a member of the United Nations. This view is completely unfounded. The country's population of 15 million Africans and more than half a million Asians is held under bloody colonial oppression and exploitation by a 3.5-million strong minority made up of descendants of colonists of Dutch (also partly French and German) origin as well as English settlers who, in the manner of typical colonizers, established their rule over the territory by force and arms, by guile and fraud, pillaging and mass murder. This fact is not altered by the other fact that the reign of terror of predatory invaders has been lasting for three centuries now, or that with the passage of time the initially small number of colonists managed to multiply the strength of the colonialist ruling classes by admitting to the country more and more colonial settlers. This does not sanction the invasion of the territory and does not change its colonialist character, nor does the fact that, by the sweat and blood of the African population, the colonialists have created a developed industry which secures their wealth and strengthens their power of oppression, but which means only poverty and dispossession to the Africans and Asians whose number amounts to more than 80 per cent of the entire population. The so-called "Republic of South Africa" is nothing else but an ordinary colony which, according to the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter, has no business to be in the community of sovereign nations, and whose government it would be a sacred duty of the United Nations to sweep off.

What I have said of the Republic of South Africa and its government accordingly applies to Southern Rhodesia and its racist settlers.

In my opinion it is to be considered regrettable that also in the scientific literature and the press of the socialist countries the South African colony is classified as a sovereign independent state.



their adversary and debtor, contemporary world imperialism, successor to the slave dealers, the invaders and butchers of the African peoples from the 15th to 19th centuries."

This means first of all that I do not aim at completeness.

It is up to the historians of every single African country to write its authentic and detailed history, and only they can write it because only they are in a position to make an appraisal of historical events accurately from the point of view of the peoples of the country concerned, to size up properly the economic and cultural achievements of their peoples. For this reason I discuss in my work exclusively the events of the political history of the countries of Black Africa, and I touch upon questions of economic and cultural advancement only where it is absolutely necessary for the understanding of political events.

My task is to provide encouragement and assistance to the young scholars of history of the young African states in their great task, which is to study and analyze in detail the history of their countries and peoples.

It follows that my approach to African history is directly opposite to that of those historians and other authors who examine the history of the countries and peoples of Black Africa overtly from the point of view of the imperialist colonial interests; it is also different from the approach of those liberal-minded authors who, while sympathizing in words with the Africans and condemning colonialism and neocolonialism, nevertheless propagate, in vague form disguised with their liberalism, the imperialist viewpoint.<sup>1</sup>

It follows further that my approach to the history of Black Africa is different also from that of sectarian Marxist authors who, in a dogmatic manner, taking no notice of the real social conditions of African countries and the real living and working conditions of their peoples, measure the class relations and the role of the classes by the same standard which MARX and LENIN established to measure the phenomena of the class struggle going on in capitalist countries.

Still something that follows from my approach: I do not claim that my work should be regarded as the result of original scientific research. Although it has taken me several decades of scientific research to write my work, I have not endeavoured (nor have I been in a position) to elucidate every historical event or phenomenon by means of personal scientific investigation. The facts which other authors before me had already elucidated in a reliable manner, so that their findings and the evidence thereof cannot be doubted, since their accuracy or authenticity is supported by many data and observations, have been taken over without further inquiry, and I narrate those facts in the words of such authors or in their spirit.

4. Since the publication of the first two volumes my work has drawn many comments and criticisms from the daily and the periodical press as well as scientific journals.

My work has been given a clearly favourable reception in the press and the scientific public of the socialist countries and the non-aligned countries of the Third World,

<sup>1</sup> This is true of the majority of liberal authors (typical examples of such "liberals" are Lord HAILEY, J. S. COLEMAN), but there are among them a great many who, although on some questions they have not yet freed themselves from the fetters to the reactionary fallacies propagated by the imperialists, still take a consistently progressive stand on the most important issues, and thus their works are of positive help to the African cause. Such liberal authors who play a positive role are, for example, MICHAEL SCOTT, RONALD SEGAL, GUY CLUTTON-BROCK, JOHN HATCH.

as well as in the Communist press and the scientific journals of Western capitalist states. I have been subjected to more serious criticism only on the part of the Communist Party of South Africa. The official organ of the party, *The African Communist*, in its issue of Spring 1966 (No. 25) publishes a review of the first volume of my work and criticizes it on two accounts.

1. It is critical of Part One dealing with the times prior to the European intrusion, because I do not discuss in detail, but only mention causally, the large feudal empires that existed in West Africa before the 12th century (Ghana, Mali, Bornu, Sonrhai). In the reviewer's opinion this is a regrettable deficiency, because, he says, without a survey of those civilizations the reader is not given "an accurate account of the destruction caused by the slave trade in the societies of West and Central Africa", and because without this, the writer opines, it is impossible to understand "why Africa seemed to be 'backward' at the beginning of the colonial and imperialist eras."

The history of the large African empires of yore has already been explored by historians better qualified than I am, among them BASIL DAVIDSON, to whom also the reviewer refers. To deal with them in detail is not called for by either the purpose or the nature of my work, nor does its size allow me to do so. Of the devastating effect exerted by the slave trade upon the African peoples, on the other hand, I gave, in accordance with my duty, I think, a satisfying picture in Part Two. And as regards the (not seeming but real) backwardness of Africans, it is for several reasons impossible to attribute it solely to the destruction caused by the slave trade to the peoples of the ancient West and Central African empires, because: (1) those empires covered a relatively small part of the vast area of Black Africa; (2) backwardness existed (to a still greater extent at that!) also with the peoples who remained unaffected by slave raids. And finally it is regrettable, but I have to state that Africa not only "seemed to be 'backward' at the beginning of the colonial and imperialist eras", but — however unfortunate it is — this backwardness still exists today, wholly or partly, in the majority of the African countries (including even newly independent states). A prerequisite for backwardness to disappear definitively is that the formally independent nations should achieve complete political and economic independence by means of a steady struggle against imperialism and neocolonialism.

2. The writer criticizes me for my positive appraisal of the fight of the Boers in the Anglo-Boer war, and for my failure to take into account that even the Boers were, also at the time, slave-holding feudal landowners who ruthlessly oppressed and exploited the Africans. The truth is that throughout the entire history of the Boers I point everywhere to the negative, reactionary features of their mentality, policy and action, but I also show the duplicity of their position (they oppressed the Africans while suffering from national oppression), and I cannot remain silent about the positive character of their wars of liberation waged against imperialist Britain. But even when discussing the second Anglo-Boer war, I emphatically point to the grave mistakes which they committed in the struggle and which resulted mostly from their reactionary attitude.

5. After the publication of the English edition of the second volume of my work the said periodical returned to the subject and again criticized me for the way I evaluate the relations between the Boer nationalists and the British imperialists. The critic is of the view that, by laying stress on the difference between British finance capital and Boer nationalism, I divert attention from the basic identity of their interests.



This charge is completely unwarranted. The conflicts between British imperialists and Boer nationalists did not rule out that their interests should be partly identical. That the Union of South Africa was the product of an alliance between the two exploiting classes (British imperialists and Boer landowners) — we wholly agree. But this does not contradict the difference between the two ruling groups. They needed the compromise just in order to make sure that their existing conflicts did not hinder them in the oppression and exploitation of Africans, in the very area where their class interests coincided. That the Boer landowners in 1924 entered a coalition with the “white” labour aristocracy essentially in order to hide their recent similar agreement with the British big capitalists (because during the war and in the first post-war years, under the SMUTS government, their conflicts sharpened again) is proved in part by the anti-labour legislation, referred to also by the reviewer, of that coalition government.

But the existence of conflicts between the Boer landowners and the British big capitalists is still more convincingly proved by the events of subsequent years: the quick dissolution of the coalition and the “oppositionist” activity of the South African Party of SMUTS who represented the interests of British big capital. With the coalition formed late in 1933 between the Nationalist Party and the South African Party, and their merger in 1934 (“United Party”), it became possible, though not to eliminate those differences, to put them aside in accordance with the common interests of British and Boer finance capital for a longer time (about a decade and a half, until the next Nationalist rise in 1948).

The critic’s second charge against my work is that I impute to the Communist Party of South Africa and some of its sectarian leaders “white chauvinistic” and opportunistic views in the initial years of the party’s existence; and the reviewer describes my assertion as false and unjust. This charge is all the more inexplicable to me as, at the same time as he affirms that there never was “colour bar” in the Communist Party of South Africa, and that the founders of the party, who in the early years had organized and directed the party, “never faltered in their adherence to Marxist principles” and “insisted that the Marxists should make the liberation of the African, Coloured and Indian people from national oppression a primary aim of the revolutionary movement”, he himself admits that the party’s founders and early leaders “were engrossed in the workers’ struggle against capital”, and that “some of its members retained certain of the prejudices and reformism that belonged to their Labour Party antecedents”, and that “because of their absorption in the class struggles of the organised workers — at a time when African trade unionism was in its infancy — many of the pioneer Communists did not correctly interpret the Leninist policy of the Communist International regarding the national liberation movement”. And finally he says of BUNTING (whose evaluation by me he qualifies as particularly “false and unjust”) that he “suffered much for his principles and never surrendered them”, but at the same time he goes on to say:

“He was no chauvinist, though like other Communists of his time he failed to arrive at a correct appreciation of the white workers’ racial prejudices, and believed that the class struggle would force them into solidarity with the Africans. Events have shown that this was a false optimism, which did not foresee the role of the white labour aristocracy as a junior partner of a Nazified Afrikaner nationalism in the ruthless oppression and exploitation of the Africans under the system of apartheid and white domination.”

*Sapienti sat!*

6. Among the countries of the Third World, I have received criticism from some scholars of the United Arab Republic only. Not in the press, nor even in a scientific journal, but in private letters, and afterwards in personal talks. My Egyptian colleagues blame me for separating the countries of Black Africa from the Mediterranean countries of Africa as if there existed two Africas, albeit Africa is one, and the Sahara is not a gap between North Africa and Black Africa but a link that closely unites them. Already in Antiquity and later the countries of Black Africa preserved close economic and cultural ties with Egypt and other Mediterranean countries. Notably Egypt always wielded a great influence over the countries of Black Africa both economically and culturally. My approach is viewed as harmful, because it is alleged to be opposed to the striving for unity of the African nations.

As a matter of fact, I answered this charge in the introduction to my first volume. I do not deny that from time to time Egypt exercised influence over the economic and cultural development of some countries of Black Africa, as Black African influences also made themselves felt in the economic and cultural development of Egypt, among others. This, however, does not alter the fact that geographical situation and historical past unite the countries of Black Africa, while separating them from the North African countries, whose geography and history are different from theirs. This does not mean that I am opposed to the unity of the African nations of our days. I welcome and endorse the striving for unity of African countries, and I wish this unity to become a reality in the very near future. But what the historian has to do with is not the present and the future, but the past, and the past is unalterable. His task is to explore the past and to write about it.

7. Both categories of bourgeois critics — advocates of the neocolonialist policy of the imperialists just like its liberal-minded critics — in their overwhelming majority recognize the significance of my work. Nearly all of them make the same objection to my work: its lack of objectivity, and that is why they think it cannot be accepted as a serious and valuable scientific work. They claim that I applaud all acts and attitudes of Africans and that, on the other hand, I censure and condemn everything the colonialists did and still do.

My answer to this charge is that objectivity is binding upon me as well, but I interpret it differently from my bourgeois critics. I am convinced that in the appreciation of human acts, of phenomena and events, it is not enough to register the mere facts; their character, causes and objectives also must be considered. One who uses the same standard to judge the guilt of a murderer and the defensive moves of the attacked person is not an objective observer but an accomplice of the murderer. To demand the application of equal standards against a burglar or a killer and his victim, against the aggressor and the attacked, is not objectivity but hypocritical cynicism. The colonialists are aggressors, oppressors and exploiters, robbers and murderers, plunderers and killers of the African peoples, and the latter are helpless and innocent victims who defend themselves as best they can.

It is undeniable that, besides their enormous crimes, the colonialists did also some good in the course of times, just as Africans also committed some crimes. My work does not fail to mention these either. This, however, does not alter the fact that a book of African history that is meant to disclose the objective reality describes the colonialists as ones whose characteristic it is that they are burglars and robbers, oppressors, plunderers and killers of the African peoples, and these peoples are innocent victims of all such colonizers.



I am proud of this charge because I could have expected nothing better to prove that I have attained my aim: contrary to the hundreds of books written on African history by bourgeois authors, who discuss that history—overtly or covertly—from the standpoint of the colonialists, I have succeeded in outlining a history of Africa from the viewpoint of its own peoples.

I really could have earned no greater praise in the eyes of my African readers, whose opinion is to me most important of all.

## PART SEVEN

### BLACK AFRICA DURING WORLD WAR II (1939-1945)

## INTRODUCTION

*THE ROLE OF BLACK AFRICA IN WORLD WAR II**The Policy of the Capitalist Powers*

World War II determined to a large extent the future of Black Africa. Although Black Africa was affected by military operations only in a small degree, the countries of the black continent played a far greater part in the war than in the previous Great War. This can be explained by three causes:

1. The North African countries, all contiguous to Black Africa, were the theatre of decisive and large-scale military operations.
2. As a consequence of the greater extension of the fronts — mainly the battles which were fought on the African continent — the belligerent parties needed ever increasing supplies of primary materials and foods.
3. The economic development of the inter-war years considerably increased the possibility of expanding production and communication in the countries of Black Africa.

It was these increased needs and greater possibilities that determined the policy of the colonial powers in Black Africa during the war. They charted their policy so as to exploit their colonies in Black Africa for military and economic purposes to the maximum extent, to build military bases there, to squeeze out the largest possible quantities of primary materials and foods, and to mobilize as many soldiers as possible for the armed forces deployed in the theatres of war — especially on the North African front.

To this end the administrations of the warring colonialist powers (Great Britain on the one side and Fascist Italy on the other) did their utmost, by introducing austerity measures, conducting war propaganda (along the antifascist line on the British side and with fascist demagoguery on the Italian side) and making promises for the future, to make sure that the African masses of the colonies were forced to increase production and to join the army in large numbers.

To ensure the success of these efforts, however, they were compelled to make a show of having a serious intention, by making some changes in their colonial propaganda, to break with their imperialist policy of colonial oppression and exploitation.

The best illustration of this was the war-time attitude of various supporters of British imperialism.

Already in the pre-war years the growing discontent and activity of the colonial populations had made the British imperialists realize that their ruthless colonial policy pursued for many decades was threatening with explosion. In 1939, still before the outbreak of war, the Colonial Office, with a view to preparing the necessary reforms, commissioned Lord HAILEY to examine the political situation in the colonial



countries. Owing to the outbreak of war, however, the reform plans were put aside and HAILEY's report was not even made public.

A similar task was fulfilled by the commission appointed to investigate into the disturbances that took place in the West Indies still in 1938. Pursuant to the recommendations of this commission the British Parliament in 1940 passed the Colonial Development and Welfare Act. This promised financial aid in carrying out "schemes for any purpose likely to promote the development of the resources of any colony or the welfare of its people". True, the legislative promise was not kept during the war years (besides, the act referred to the development of the Caribbean colonies in the first place), but the British government attained its goal: it demonstrated to all colonial peoples that it intended in the future, by changing its former colonial policy, to promote the economic development and the welfare of their countries.

Then followed, in August 1941, the New Foundland meeting between Prime Minister CHURCHILL of Great Britain and President ROOSEVELT of the United States, and the publication of the *Atlantic Charter* which proclaimed "the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live".

The Atlantic Charter aroused big enthusiasm in Africa. Young representatives of the oppressed African peoples who were living abroad (students pursuing studies in England and the United States) hoped that the allied Western powers would take seriously the principles laid down in the Atlantic Charter, and that accordingly the African colonies would see the road open towards independence after the war.<sup>1</sup>

That the governments of the Western big powers were not serious about the principles they themselves had formulated in the Atlantic Charter was soon to appear when CHURCHILL, seeing the enthusiasm with which the Charter was received by the peoples of Africa and oppressed peoples everywhere, hastened to state that the Atlantic Charter did not apply to the colonies, that he and ROOSEVELT, when speaking of the right to self-determination, had had in mind solely the European states and peoples, and that the Atlantic Charter was not law anyway but only a "guide". He said at the same time that he did not wish to assist in the liquidation of the British Empire. "We mean to hold our own", he said.

CHURCHILL's statement roused great indignation among representatives of the independence movements of African and other colonial countries. They viewed it as a breach of the solemn promise and as evidence that imperialism had not changed, that it meant to continue upholding the system of colonial exploitation of the oppressed peoples, and that its highfalutin phrases about the right of peoples to self-determination served only to mislead the peoples, that the aim of the imperialists was to mobilize the colonial peoples in the interest of their war efforts. CHURCHILL's statement encouraged still more the national sentiment and the yearning for independence among the most conscious elements of the colonial peoples.<sup>2</sup>

The Atlantic Charter had made a deep impression, and CHURCHILL's backing down evoked deep indignation also in the United States, primarily among the American Negroes. The events of the world war, the Atlantic Charter, and CHURCHILL's attitude galvanized into action the best elements of the American Negroes, awakened the interest of broad masses of them for the fate of their African brothers

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Nnamdi Azikiwe, *The Atlantic Charter and British West Africa*, Lagos, 1941.

<sup>2</sup> See the following manifestations of representatives of the Nigerian movements: Ozuomba Kingsley Mbaduwe, *British and Axis Aims in Africa*, New York, 1942; Nnamdi Azikiwe, *Political Blueprint of Nigeria*, Lagos, 1943; *Nigerian Youth Movement: Memorandum submitted by the Nigerian Youth Movement to the Rt. Honourable Colonel Stanley, M.P., Lagos, 1943.*

suffering from colonial yoke and mobilized them to endorse their demand for independence.<sup>1</sup>

But CHURCHILL's recantation enraged not only the Negroes. It incurred strong criticism also from American scientists and other intellectuals, and even from leading politicians. The position taken up by CHURCHILL was disapproved by no lesser personages than President ROOSEVELT<sup>2</sup> and Vice-President HENRY WALLACE,<sup>3</sup> Secretary of State CORDELL HULL<sup>4</sup> and Under-Secretary of State SUMNER WELLES.<sup>5</sup> The first and most categorical objection to CHURCHILL's stand came from WENDELL WILLKIE: "I found the dread of imperialism everywhere... In Africa, in the Middle East, as well as in China and the whole of Far East freedom means the orderly but scheduled abolition of the colonial system... The rule of people by other people is not freedom and not what we must fight to preserve..."<sup>6</sup>

The British war cabinet, however, refused to heed its American critics. CHURCHILL repeated time and again his statement denying the colonial peoples their right to self-determination, and his Foreign Secretary, OLIVER STANLEY, said bluntly: "I am more interested in what Britain thinks of the British Empire than what the United States thinks of it."<sup>7</sup>

The same STANLEY during his visit to America made a statement entirely in keeping with the Churchillian spirit: "... throughout the greater part of the Colonial Empire, it is, for the present, at any rate, the British presence alone which prevents a disastrous disintegration, and British withdrawal today would mean for millions a descent from nascent nationhood into the turmoil of warring sects."<sup>8</sup>

The same negative stand is reflected in official statements by the British government which, when making reference to the future of the colonies, took good care not to go beyond generalities. In one of his speeches in the Commons CHURCHILL said that the political aim of British policy in the colonies was "the fullest possible political, economic and social development within the British Empire".<sup>9</sup>

Likewise in Parliament O. STANLEY stated: "... educational advance and economic development... [are] the twin pillars upon which any sound scheme of political responsibility must be based."<sup>10</sup> (Which meant that the right of self-determination was out of the question until those two "pillars" had been erected whose construction was made impossible just by the existence of the colonial system.)

During the war Britain had a coalition government with Labour participation. At the beginning of the war the Labour leaders still spoke up against imperialism and advocated the rights of Africans. Immediately following the outbreak of war CLEMENT ATTLEE stated: "Labour... repudiates imperialism. We believe that all peoples of whatever race and colour have an equal right to freedom and to an equitable share in the good things of the world."<sup>11</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., RALPH J. BUNCHE, "Africa and the Current World Conflict", *Negro History Bulletin*, Oct. 1940; *The Atlantic Charter and Africa from an American Standpoint*, New York, 1942; W. E. B. DUBOIS, "The Realities in Africa", *Foreign Affairs*, July 1943.

<sup>2</sup> *Fortune*, March 1943.

<sup>3</sup> H. WALLACE, *Democracy Reborn*, New York, 1944.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. *The Memoirs of Cordell Hull*, New York, 1948, pp. 1235 ff.

<sup>5</sup> *The World of the Four Freedoms*, New York, 1943, p. 75.

<sup>6</sup> *The New York Times*, Oct. 27, 1942.

<sup>7</sup> *The London Times*, March 6, 1943.

<sup>8</sup> OLIVER STANLEY's comments to the Foreign Policy Association of New York on January 19, 1945. Cf. *The New York Times*, Jan. 20, 1945.

<sup>9</sup> *Debates, House of Commons*, March 17, 1943.

<sup>10</sup> *Debates, House of Commons*, July 23, 1943.

<sup>11</sup> C. B. ATTLEE, *Labour's Peace Aims*, London, 1939, p. 4.



Even two years later the leader of the Labour Party spoke in these terms: "We in the Labour Party have always been conscious of the wrongs done by the white race to the races with darker skins. We have always demanded that the freedom which we claim for ourselves should be extended to all men. I look for an ever increasing measure of self-government in Africa."<sup>1</sup>

Later during the war, however, it became clear that this stand of the Labour Party merely served propaganda aims. The Labour leaders of the government coalition undertook to join CHURCHILL's united front not only in foreign politics but also on the line of imperialist colonial policy. Labour M.P. CREECH JONES said in the House of Commons in June 1944: "Britain today is in the colonies and she cannot withdraw; nor do I think it desirable that she should. We are pledged, in these Colonial territories, to the pursuit of a policy of constructive trusteeship, a policy which is to lead, we hope, to partnership inside the British Commonwealth."<sup>2</sup>

Although in England, both within and without the Labour Party, there were no small number of liberal elements who sympathized with the American liberals and the African peoples,<sup>3</sup> yet their large majority were doubtful of the feasibility and viability, in African countries, of the Western type of self-government and parliamentary system. Therefore, their schemes and recommendations made during the war for the future of the African countries left unmentioned both the time-table of independence and the introduction of general suffrage.

A special place among the colonial powers during the war was held by "Free France" with her peculiar policy. The circumstance that the French resistance and liberation movement had started out from the French colonies of Black Africa created a sort of understanding and co-operation between the authorities of Free France and the African populations, in spite of the hardships suffered by the latter masses.<sup>4</sup>

### *Conflicts between the Colonialists*

In the countries of Black Africa the conflicts and rivalries between the two greatest colonial powers — Britain and France — were suspended during the war. All the more acute became their struggle in common against the Italian colonialists, now taking the form of armed fighting, for the occupation or liberation of the Italian colonies (and of Ethiopia, British Somaliland and French Somaliland then under the heels of the Italian invaders).

A new feature of the struggle between imperialists during the war was the armed fight and propaganda warfare which the split French bourgeoisie (the Vichy regime collaborating with Germany, and Free France under the direction of DE GAULLE) conducted to get hold of France's colonies in Black Africa.

One typical development of the war years was marked by the increasing infiltration of U.S. capital into the countries of Black Africa, the growing economic and

political influence of the United States, and the building of U.S. military bases.<sup>1</sup>

On the "internal front" of the British colonialists a "cease-fire" set in between the British government and the settlers in the colonies of Black Africa where white settlers were living in large numbers (Kenya, Tanganyika, the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland). Being in need of the material and armed support of the settlers, the British government managed to make sure, in part by giving material concessions and in part by dangling promises, that the settlers supported the government's war efforts and, for the duration of the war, stopped insisting on their special demands.

In the Union of South Africa the war provoked a split in the more or less homogeneous camp of the colonizers: a part of the bourgeoisie, under the leadership of General SMUTS following a British orientation at the helm of the government, gave its active support to the war of Britain, while another part, the fascist sympathizers who were the majority of the Nationalist "Boer" (Afrikaner) bourgeoisie of capitalists and landowners, forming different Nationalist parties and organizations headed by ex-Premier HERTZOG and by other extremist Nationalist politicians (HAVENGA, PIROW), stood up and made propaganda against the war.

### *The Balance-Sheet of World War II in Black Africa*

To find out what World War II brought to the countries of Black Africa in the long run, we have to examine the matter from the point of view of colonial imperialism and from that of the countries of Black Africa separately.

The aims of the imperialist colonial great powers were crowned with success: during World War II Black Africa supplied to the belligerent European colonial powers a great deal more strategic raw materials and foodstuffs, as well as much more fighting men, than in World War I.

For the colonialists the war closed with a definite profit on the economic line. Production, both industrial and agricultural, as well as the exports, expanded in most African colonies. The monopoly companies and some big capitalists having interests in Africa pocketed enormous profits.

The strategic value of the countries of Black Africa for the imperialist great powers increased to a considerable extent during the war. The number of military bases, both naval and air bases, multiplied. The network of strategic roads increased manifold.

In the political field the imperialist powers gained as well as lost. Their gains were marked, first of all, by their stifling for years the liberation movements of Africans through persuading them of the necessity of partaking of the war efforts. But they won also by the fact that the European settlers living in large numbers in some of the South and East African colonies had to set aside their aspirations for self-govern-

<sup>1</sup> *Daily Herald*, Aug. 10, 1941.

<sup>2</sup> *Debates, House of Commons*, June 6, 1944.

<sup>3</sup> In November 1942, for example, *The London Times* published a series of articles by a Liberal, MARGERY PERHAM, giving a positive appraisal of the American criticism of CHURCHILL's attitude and arriving at the conclusion that, "taken broadly and at best, the American challenge to us to hasten the work of de-imperializing the Empire can lead only to good." *The London Times*, Nov. 21, 1942.

<sup>4</sup> For more detail, see Part Seven, Chapter 7.

<sup>1</sup> Already during the war the U.S. imperialists showed especially great interest in the Congo's abundant mineral resources. Indeed, towards the end of the war, they managed to obtain there the uranium needed for the construction of the atomic bomb. Characteristic of this interest is the fact that in the war years dozens of novels and travel books dealing with the Congo were published in the United States. Some typical examples: STUART CLOETE, *Congo Song*, Philadelphia, 1943 (a novel about the life among European colonists in the Congo); W. E. DAVIS, *Ten Years in the Congo*, New York, 1940 (first published in 1938); ATTILIO GATTI, *Kamanda, an African Boy*, New York, 1941 (a novel on the life of the Congolese peoples).



ment and decentralization and stop their activities in this direction for the duration of the war.

But the balance-sheet of the war displayed also liabilities for the imperialist colonial powers.

The bourgeoisie of European landlords and capitalists in all African countries strengthened both materially and politically. This holds particularly of the settlers of South Africa, Southern Rhodesia, and Kenya, who had become extremely impudent. The South African fascists already believed they were strong enough to carry out their imperialist dreams after the war (annexation of South West Africa, the three British High Commission territories, and Rhodesia) and to continue methodically their reactionary racial policies within the Union (total deprivation of non-Europeans of their rights by means of the practices of apartheid). The settler minorities in Southern Rhodesia and Kenya kept dreaming of seceding from the British Empire and taking into their hands the administration of their respective countries. In addition, the Southern Rhodesia settlers were aiming to annex Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland or unite them in a federation. The Kenya settlers had similar designs regarding Tanganyika, Uganda, and Zanzibar.

Another political loss incurred by the colonialists was that after the war the African peoples, having found out that their aspirations for freedom and independence had been inflamed by false promises and lying propaganda, were filled with hatred, bitterness and militancy against the colonial system.

Several changes took place in the power relationships of colonial imperialism, too. A change of extreme consequence was the increasing American penetration, role and influence in Black Africa. Despite the fact that it had no colony proper on the African continent, at the end of the war the United States played the first fiddle in the Africa concert of the imperialists. The two leading colonial powers, Britain and France — while they still remained masters of the colonies they had acquired before the war (the British colonial empire even grew actually, comprising also the former Italian possessions, except Ethiopia which had regained independence) — had no decisive say in Africa as they had in earlier decades.

The war imposed serious burdens and great hardships on the peoples of Black Africa. Especially their economic situation became aggravated. The war-time boom, which had brought prosperity to the ruling classes, meant to the Africans increased exploitation and a further decline in their material conditions. At the same time, in some countries, particularly in West Africa, a thin stratum of the populations, which had already been engaged in commercial pursuits or commodity production also before the war, found some way of getting rich on the war-time boom.

The political situation of the African masses also deteriorated. It is true that the colonialists, in order to increase the war efforts of the African peoples, saw fit to give them some meagre concessions (administrative reforms, etc.) and to make some definite promises for the future, such as serious political reforms to be introduced after the war in preparation of the attainment of independence; but in reality — under the pretext of the state of war — they installed a more severe police regime than before. The meagre rights the Africans had enjoyed up to then were also curtailed considerably. By the end of the war the regime of oppression was nearly everywhere more severe than before.

Significant changes occurred during the war also in the class composition and social development of the peoples of Black Africa. The process of detribalization continued in almost all colonial territories. In West Africa the African bourgeoisie strengthened. The working class of several countries increased in numbers.

As concerns the national liberation movements of the peoples of Black Africa, there was an important advancement in this field, too, despite the paralyzing effect of the severe war regime. The privations and sufferings resulting from the war, the experiences many Africans had made on the fronts and in the army, the aforementioned social changes due to the war-time economic expansion, as well as the reforms introduced and the promises made by the imperialists added much to the growing national consciousness and aspiration for independence of broad masses of the African peoples. Though acute struggles took place only by way of exception under the circumstances, and the movements slackened in respect of organization in some countries, nevertheless new formations came into existence in others, and new, more organized movements started, a characteristic feature of which was the gradual passage of leadership from the chiefs into the hands of workers and intellectuals.

And, finally, as regards the labour movement, though important actions in the years of the war occurred only in the Union of South Africa, the numerical growth of the working class in many countries of Black Africa led to the quantitative and qualitative improvement of the labour unions.

The most important item of the balance-sheet of World War II for Black Africa, an item of decisive importance both for the African peoples and for the colonialists, was the change that took place as a consequence of the war in the international power relations, and which in the years immediately following the war sparked off the disintegration of the colonial system, thereby opening a new, decisive chapter in the history of Black Africa.

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## CHAPTER II

### BRITISH WEST AFRICA

During World War II the West African colonies were of especially great strategical and economic importance for Britain, because their geographical position made them useful, on the one hand, for easier contact with the United States and, on the other, as bases on the longer but safer sea route to India. At the same time their natural wealth and economic resources provided Britain with extensive supplies of the food-stuffs and primary products increasingly needed in times of war.

Accordingly it was the British government's policy to make the most effective use of these countries both economically and strategically (by increasing production and exports, establishing military, mainly naval, bases).

To achieve their aims the British imperialists pursued a twofold policy in their West African colonies: on the one hand, by introducing administrative and cultural reforms they tried to win the African population over to endorsing their war efforts, while on the other hand, where these measures failed to bring the desired results, they resorted to force. Thus they secured a considerable expansion of production in those countries and enlisted large numbers of Africans in active military service.

The production increase served not only strategic interests, it also considerably added to the profits of the capitalist companies operating in West Africa.

As regards the African peoples, this war-time boom in West Africa had its effects — in part negative, in part positive — on them, too. The material situation of broad masses worsened as the result of increased exploitation, but the conditions favoured the enrichment of the African bourgeoisie.

The war-time boom led to perceptible changes in the class composition of the African population, too. The working class was growing in all four colonies in British West Africa. Some of the tribal chiefs and feudal elements, making use of the boom, took to commercial pursuits or stepped up their former trade activities. This had as a consequence that the gulf separating the traditional (tribal and feudal) rulers from the bourgeoisie and the nationalist and democratically minded intelligentsia narrowed down, the different leading strata of the African population got closer to one another. Furthermore, not only the workers, the bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia, but also the tribal and feudal rulers, and through them the peasantry under their influence, became more nationally conscious and entertained growing aspirations for independence, which in turn created a favourable ground for national liberation movements to be started.

From the point of view of the independence movements in British West Africa the war years were a period of preparation. In the war-time conditions there was no noteworthy progress in the whole territory — except in Nigeria. It was the West African students taking courses abroad (in England and the United States) who,



making use of the greater freedoms under bourgeois democracy in the two Western great powers' conditions, made preparations in order that, once back home after the war, they might take part in launching the fight for liberation.

At the time the war broke out hundreds of West African students were attending English universities. Still before the war they established the West African Students Union (W.A.S.U.). Though the membership included students who were influenced by missionaries, the majority were keeping contact with the Fabian Colonial Bureau, the Congress of the People Against Imperialism, and other left-wing organizations.

In 1941, shortly after the proclamation of the Atlantic Charter, the W.A.S.U. addressed to ATTLEE a memorandum and put the question:

"Great Britain has proclaimed its determination to re-establish and support the national independence of the countries of Europe, of Ethiopia, and of Syria, but what about West Africa?"

Also in 1941 the W.A.S.U. held a conference on the problems of West Africa and passed a resolution, among other things, on the future of Nigeria.<sup>1</sup>

On April 6, 1942, the Union sent the Secretary of State for the Colonies a memorandum stating:

"In the interest of Freedom, Justice, and true Democracy, and in view of the lessons of Malaya and Burma, as well as the obvious need of giving the peoples of the Empire something to fight for, the WASU in Great Britain strongly urges the British Government to grant to the British West African Colonies and Protectorates Internal Self-Government Now, with a definite guarantee of complete self-government within five years after the war."

In 1943 eight West African journalists — with NNAMDI AZIKIWE at their head — were to London at the invitation of the British Council and established close contact with the W.A.S.U. Before returning home, they presented the Colonial Secretary a memorandum entitled *The Atlantic Charter and British West Africa*, drawn up by AZIKIWE. With reference to promising statements by British politicians regarding the future of the colonies, as well as to the Atlantic Charter, they proposed the immediate abolition of the system of "Crown Colonies", the replacement of colonial officials by Africans, the establishment of 400 annual scholarships for West African students, the formation of representative governments in the British colonies, to be followed by responsible governments in ten years, and demanded that in another five years — that is by 1958 — the British West African countries be granted full independence and become sovereign states within the British Commonwealth of Nations.

The British government totally ignored this memorandum. But the W.A.S.U. formed a Parliamentary Commission whose members met every other week to see (mostly Labour) M.P.s who were concerned with the fate of the African countries and who undertook to voice the complaints of Africans and broach their problems in Parliament.

In the last stage of the war the number of African students in England grew somewhat, but the W.A.S.U. lost its importance, on the one hand, because students from every country set up special organizations (for example, the Nigerians at the end of the war had two organizations of their own: the London group of the N.C.N.C. and the "Egbe Omo Oduduwa", a Yoruba cultural association formed by AWOLOWO) and, on the other hand, because the initiative gradually passed into the hands of the patriots active in the various West African countries.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 36 below.

Of still greater importance for the post-war independence movement of West African countries was the experience made in America by West African students who took courses there (mostly at Lincoln University). In 1941 those students (mainly from West Africa) formed the African Students' Association in the United States and Canada, and launched a monthly periodical, the *African Interpreter*. The Association entered into contact and permanent correspondence with the W.A.S.U. in London. In 1943 it espoused AZIKIWE's London memorandum, and further on, during the war, it organized conferences and symposia throughout America — first of all in New York — on the problems of Africa, in the first place for the information of the American public.

The Association adopted a programme which stated notably:

"We strongly urge the governing bodies of the British Empire and their Allies, in the cause of democracy, to grant internal self-government to the colonial peoples of Africa . . . The fundamental principles of democracy as expressed in the Four Freedoms and the Atlantic Charter . . . must be applied immediately . . . We emphatically demand that those who claim to be fighting for democracy implement their expressed ideals by considering Africa a sovereign land . . ."

To show the great importance of the college years in America for the training of the political leaders of the post-war struggle for the liberation of the West African countries, suffice it to mention that among the twenty-eight West African students who in the war years studied in the United States, there were such personages as KWAME NKRUMAH and AKO ADJEI (later Minister of Trade and then Foreign Minister of Ghana) from the Gold Coast, S. A. AKPABIO (later Minister of Education and Deputy Prime Minister of Eastern Nigeria) and OZUOMBA MBADIWE (later Federal Minister of Trade and Industry of Nigeria) from Nigeria, W. H. FITZJOHN (later member of the Sierra Leone People's Party and professor at Fourah College) from Sierra Leone.

#### *The Gold Coast*

During World War II the Gold Coast contributed in a significant measure to the war efforts of Great Britain. The West African Command of the British Army had its headquarters in the Gold Coast (at Achimota College near Accra). The colony gave the British armed forces about seventy thousand troops who stood their ground bravely, among others, in the battles for the liberation of Ethiopia and Burma.

No less important was the material contribution of the colony: economically it consisted in increased production and exports of the foods and primary products (cocoa and palm oil, magnesium and rubber) of special importance in times of war; financially it meant voluntary money contributions and subscriptions to interest-free war loans. Bauxite production in the colony started during the war, in 1941.

The increased exploitation of the natural resources of the colony under the war-time circumstances (rising prices of food products and manufactured goods; unchanged wages) greatly deteriorated the situation of African workers and cocoa producers. True, the African capitalists engaged in commission business and African plantation owners augmented their incomes, but they were pressed hard, more than before, by the privileged position of the monopolist companies and encumbered by their own political subjection.

The discontent of workers touched off minor local strikes which, owing to poor organization, could not bring serious results. Still, because of the frequent strikes,



the colonial authorities in September 1942 were compelled to permit the formation of African trade unions.

The African nationalist bourgeoisie became politically active during the war years. African capitalists more and more often demanded democratic constitutional reforms and Africanization of the colonial apparatus of self-government. The organization within which the African nationalist bourgeoisie displayed its political activity was mainly the Gold Coast Youth Conference functioning from 1937 onwards under the leadership of Dr. JOSEPH DANQUAH.<sup>1</sup> This organization in 1941 prepared a reform programme, but the British Governor refused to discuss reform. The following year DANQUAH combined with several of his lawyer friends for the framing of a draft constitution. The draft was completed and in 1943 was handed to the visiting Colonial Secretary; nevertheless, he was unwilling to consider it. Instead, the colonial administration itself prepared and introduced certain reforms, most of which, however, rather delayed than promoted democracy and independence.

The administration took a modest positive step in 1942: it admitted to the Executive Council — which had consisted exclusively of official appointees — two (likewise nominated) unofficial African members, and in 1944, under pressure from the rulers of the Kingdom of Ashanti ("Council of the Confederation of Ashanti"), the British government agreed that also appointed representatives of the feudal rulers of Ashanti should hold posts in the Legislative Council. In 1944 the "Native Authority Ordinance" and the "Native Courts Ordinance" were introduced. In fact, however, both reforms meant one step backwards. Under the Native Authority Ordinance only a "native authority" recognized as such was considered a local government organ; the "native authorities" were controlled by the colonial administration, and the latter was entitled to invest any colonial official with the powers of "native authority". The Native Courts Ordinance provided that "native courts" could be established only by order of the British Governor, their jurisdiction being also circumscribed by the Governor and their activity controlled by the colonial administration, which could even reverse their decisions. The powers of the "native authorities" in respect of the courts consisted only in that the Governor consulted them about the forming of courts and they designated the presiding judges.

In the years 1943 to 1945 the colonial administration issued four ordinances on the reorganization of the town councils. Since 1894 each of the three towns of the colony (Accra, Cape Coast, and Sekondi) had had its council with equal numbers of nominated and elected members, presided over by an official appointed by the colonial authority.

Town councils of this composition being disliked by the African urban population, the colonial administration as early as 1929 wanted to introduce councils with an elective majority, but it had to abandon the plan because the chiefs ("kings") of the provinces ("native states") demanded that their nominated representatives also

<sup>1</sup> JOSEPH DANQUAH was born of an Akyembuaqua royal family at Bepong in the West Region of the colony in 1895. He studied in London and took his degree in law in 1927. In 1930 he went back to the Gold Coast, where he founded *The Times of West Africa*, in which he pressed for constitutional reform. In 1934 he was secretary of the Gold Coast and Ashanti joint delegation sent to London to protest to the Colonial Office against certain "native laws" and demand that the majority of the Legislative Council be composed of unofficial members. He remained in London until 1936 to do research at the British Museum into the history of the ancient state of Ghana. He was the first to propose that the Gold Coast be renamed Ghana. In 1936 he returned to his country, where he practised law. He published a number of books on his scientific research. His principal work is *Ancestors, Heroes and God: The Principles of Akamashanti Ancestor-Worship and European Hero-Worship*, Kibi (Gold Coast), 1938.

sit on the town councils. At the time the colonial administration was unwilling to comply and dropped the draft reform.

But now, fifteen years later, the colonial administration met this old demand of the feudal chiefs by modelling the councils of the three towns so as to comprise three official members appointed by the Governor, two unofficial members designated by the head chief, one unofficial member nominated by the Chamber of Commerce, and seven elected members. Presiding over the council was invariably an official nominated by the Governor. The council had thus an unofficial majority, and even an African majority (inclusive of the nominated representatives of the chiefs), but the one-vote majority of elected African members was of no practical value, since the official members in league with the representatives of chiefs, in order to force their will upon the council, had to bring influence to bear on a single elected African member only.

The cause of independence was promoted neither by the increased role and activity of the feudal rulers of Ashanti nor by the reform demands of the bourgeois elements. In May 1945, however, a young student from the Gold Coast, KWAME NKRUMAH,<sup>1</sup> who until then had studied in the United States, came to London. He decided that the purpose of the freedom struggle of the peoples of the Gold Coast was not to demand reforms but to put an end to colonial rule and to achieve the independence of the country. In London he joined the West African Students Union established in the capital of England two decades before. He was elected Vice-President, and together with the President of the Union, AKO ADJEI,<sup>2</sup> another revolutionary Gold Coast student who had come from America a few months earlier, he prepared for the struggle to be launched after the war to liberate the peoples of the Gold Coast and of all African countries suffering under the yoke of the colonialists.

### Nigeria

During World War II the importance of Nigeria for Great Britain grew from both the military and the economic point of view.

The British government secured the maximum economic exploitation of the colony by the expansion and strict control of the production and export of strategic materials and agricultural products. In addition to increasing the production and export of

<sup>1</sup> KWAME NKRUMAH was born in 1909 at Nkroful, a village in the Western Province of Gold Coast Colony near the border of the Ivory Coast. His father was a goldsmith in the Nzima tribe. NKRUMAH went to school at Roman Catholic missions and later was a pupil teacher. In 1926 he went to the teachers' college of Accra maintained by the colonial administration, and after graduation he taught in elementary school for several years. In 1935, with the financial aid of his uncle, he went to the United States to pursue his studies. He won a bachelor's degree in economics and sociology and a master's degree in theology and science at Lincoln University in Pennsylvania. During those years he took up occasional jobs as a seaman and a dockworker. After finishing his studies he was an instructor of political science at Lincoln University until 1945. For a time he took an active part in the "African Students Association of America and Canada", which elected him President.

<sup>2</sup> AKO ADJEI was born at Labadi in 1916. His father was a cocoa farmer in the Ga tribe. AKO ADJEI studied at the Accra Academy. For a time he taught in school. In 1938 he went to the United States, where, following in NKRUMAH's steps, he studied at Lincoln University, and then at Hampton Institute in Virginia. Later he took up sociology at Columbia University in New York. In 1944 he moved to England, where he attended courses in law and sociology at the London School of Economics. In 1945 he was elected President of the West African Students Union.



traditional export goods (tin, palm oil and palm kernels, groundnuts, cocoa, cotton) the British started the mining of mineral substances (columbite, wolfram) and the production of rubber. Already in the early years of the war the government got control over the whole economy of the territory (by regulating prices and wages, communication, export trade, etc.). In 1942 it ordered the entire cocoa crop of the country to be stored up for the duration of the war. This measure was later applied also to palm oil, rubber, cotton and groundnuts. The value of annual exports grew from £10,300,000 in 1939 to £24,600,000 by the end of the war, while that of the imports rose from £6,800,000 to £19,800,000.

Owing to the difficulties in maritime traffic, the imports of food and other consumer goods went down, resulting in an increase in the import prices and leading to the establishment of a number of new local industries. (The yearly average of sugar imports in 1940–1945 was 26 per cent of those in 1934–1939, that of tinned fish imports went down to 11 and dried fish imports to 2 per cent. The prices of consumer goods increased by 50 to 75 per cent between 1939 and 1942.)

The expansion of production, the establishment of new local industries, and the various military constructions involved a growing number of workers and employees, thereby inflating the urban populations. The number of wage- and salary-earners which in 1939 totalled 183,000 rose to about 300,000 by 1946. The population of Enugu, the capital of the Eastern Region, for example, increased fivefold between 1939 and 1946.

The colony gave the British armed forces a considerable number of soldiers, too. During the war about 100,000 Nigerians did military service at the various fronts, and thousands of Africans were recruited for building operations within the country.

The fact of the war having spread to North Africa, as well as the Near and the Middle East, considerably enhanced the strategic importance of Nigeria. The colony served as an essential transit station for the transportation of troops and war materials to those battlefronts (especially after the French West African colonies came under the rule of the Vichy government "allied to Germany"). In the course of the war over 100,000 British and thousands of U.S. troops passed through the country (often even stationing there for months on end). Several modern airfields and military camps as well as strategic roads were built for this purpose.

The war-time boom added considerably to the profits of large foreign export firms, private businessmen and exporters, while the increasing prices of consumer goods were weighing on the African peasants, whose incomes even diminished as a result of official price regulations, and on the African workers, who saw their wage decrease all the time. (The wages in 1942 were about 70 per cent of those in 1939.) True, the economic positions of African capitalists (entrepreneurs and traders) strengthened somewhat (small and medium African capitalists founded businesses in wood-working, leather-processing, trading, etc.). Nevertheless, the monopoly position of British-controlled banks and the competition of foreign monopoly companies were hard to fight against. On the one hand, the difficult material circumstances of the toiling people and, on the other, the growing activity of the nascent national bourgeoisie — besides general effects of the formation of national and class consciousness — gave a strong impetus to the mass movements which had made a slow start before the war.

Unlike the Gold Coast, Nigeria during the war years registered considerable progress both in the labour movement and in the liberation movement.

## The Labour Movement

Prior to World War II the Africans in Nigeria had had altogether five trade unions, of which the two most important were not workers' unions (Union of Civil Servants, Nigerian Union of Teachers). During the early years of the war, however, the number of unions rose from five to seventy and by 1944 was eighty-five. This rapid growth of the labour movement can be ascribed to two causes. First, the serious deterioration of the material conditions of the workers (high prices, inflation, decreasing wages). Second, the fact that from 1940 on the British government itself, which before the war had been wary of the trade-union movement, encouraged and promoted the formation of such unions. It did so, on the one side, because considerations of domestic policy impelled it to yield amid the war-time conditions,<sup>1</sup> and, on the other, because it assumed that by exerting influence upon the trade-union officials it would be in a position to put down the inevitably ensuing discontent and possible strike movements of the workers.

That this official policy encouraging the formation of trade unions was not dictated by regard for the workers' interests was to appear soon, when in October 1942 the British government banned all strikes for the duration of the war. The unions organized protest meetings and in November 1942 formed the "Federated Trade Unions of Nigeria", which in July 1943 was renamed the "Nigerian Trades Union Congress". Backed up by political leaders — among them MACAULAY, AZIKIWE and AWOLowo — the Congress stood up for industrialization, the nationalization of natural resources and public utilities, for the establishment of a Labour party and the unity of all Nigerian trade unions. To propagate this programme, the Congress published a quarterly bulletin, *Nigerian Worker*, under the editorship of AWOLowo.

In September 1943 the leaders of the Trades Union Congress sent the Colonial Secretary a memorandum setting forth the demands of the workers. In the course of 1944 they held mass meetings and public debates, celebrated May Day and organized a "Workers' Week". The Congress leadership sought and maintained contact with several organizations abroad, thus with the British Trades Union Congress and the Fabian Society, the Council on African Affairs in New York, etc.

Nevertheless, the trade unions played no notable role in the political life of Nigeria until the last stage of the war. This was partly due to their numerical weakness. Most of them were local unions with very few members (68 out of the 85 registered unions in 1944 had less than 500 members each, and only seven had memberships amounting to over a thousand), and the total number of unionized workers made up hardly 10 per cent of all workers (in Northern Nigeria, for instance, no trade union existed at all). Another reason was to be found in the Congress leadership itself, in its over-cautious, overly moderate policy. In fact, some leading members, who were at the same time officers of the colonial administration, being afraid of losing the good will of the authorities, were out to keep the unions affiliated to the Congress from engaging in any political activity.

But this opportunist policy of the leaders proved a failure at the end of the war — in 1945 the major trade unions went on a general strike.

<sup>1</sup> Upon the insistence of the Labour Party the British government had to include in the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940 a provision under which the central government might grant material assistance only to a territory where the workers enjoyed freedom of organization.



The strike was started by the Government Workers' Union and was later joined by the unions of railwaymen, postal and telegraph workers and others. The unions raised economic demands (a minimum daily rate of 2s. 6d. and a 50 per cent increase in the cost-of-living allowances), but their demands had also a political purport: they protested against certain practices of racial discrimination (namely, the cost-of-living allowance paid to European workers went on increasing automatically with the growing prices, while the allowance granted to Africans had been unchanged since 1942). Although the union leaders, upon a request from the Governor, called off the strike in the last moment, the strike broke out and lasted 37 days. About 30,000 members of 17 unions participated in it. Though the workers at some places returned to work in a few days, most unions persisted and did not stop striking until the government had definitely promised that the strikers would not be harmed and their complaints would be examined by an impartial commission.

Although this was only a half-success, the strike still had great significance from several points of view:

1. it definitively unmasked the opportunist policy of the Congress leaders in the eyes of the workers;
2. it enhanced the reputation and popularity of AZIKIWE and the N.C.N.C. for their strong support of the strike movement;
3. it convinced the workers of the importance of organization — of the fact that proper organization and the use or threat of force could compel the government to concessions;
4. by shifting the labour movement from the narrow bounds of wage fights, it directed its course towards close co-operation with the national movement and its struggle for independence;
5. and finally, though the strike was joined by very few workers from the North, these were instrumental in developing, through this strike, the national and political consciousness of the peoples of Northern Nigeria.

### *The Independence Movement*

The Nigerian independence movement grew out of the Youth Movement, which was promoted by the youth organizations functioning from the thirties onwards, and of the activity of Nigerian students attending university abroad. A particularly important and active role in the organization of the independence movement was played by Nnamdi Azikiwe and Obafemi Awolowo, who had come from the Youth Movement themselves. They as well as the other leaders of the Youth Movement saw clearly that new tasks awaited them after the war, and the partisans of independence had to prepare for them politically and organizationally still during the war. As to the essence and fulfilment of those tasks, however, they entertained different ideas.

### *Nigerian Students Abroad*

Among the African students in England there were about a hundred Nigerians who took part in the activities of the W.A.S.U. It was at their initiative that in 1941 the W.A.S.U. conference on the problems of West Africa passed a resolution, which it sent also to the British Governor-General of Nigeria, demanding a "Federal Consti-

tution" for Nigeria "based on a Swiss or USA model with necessary modifications", and stressed that "local tribal loyalty" be gradually transcended by "Nigerian National Loyalty".

The cultural society formed by Yoruba students in England towards the end of the war, as well as the formation of the London branch of the National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C.) has already been mentioned earlier in this book.

Before 1938 twenty Nigerian students (AZIKIWE among them) prosecuted their studies in the United States. A year before the war (1938) another twelve Nigerian students went to follow courses there. While the majority of earlier students had been sent to study theology by the missionary societies, eight of the twelve new students were AZIKIWE's followers, true patriots (all from the Ibo tribe), who studied at Lincoln University (like AZIKIWE earlier) and took an active part in the organization and activities of the African Students Association in the United States and Canada. Three of them — MBONE OJIKE, NWAFOR ORIZU and OZUOMBA MBADIWE — travelled all over the United States and gave lectures on Africa, and then wrote and published books.<sup>1</sup>

### *The Nigerian Youth Movement*

The Nigerian Youth Movement became active in the years preceding World War II. It stepped up its activity especially at the time of the 1938 cocoa crisis. Its efforts in the interest of the cocoa producers won nationwide reputation to the Movement, which had until then concentrated almost exclusively on Lagos. This made it possible for the Movement, which up to that time had some organizations only in the Yoruba-inhabited towns of Western Nigeria, to get a foothold in other regions of the country as well. In 1938 the Movement already had about 10,000 members and more than twenty regional organizations, thus at Benin City, as well as at Enugu, Port Harcourt and Calabar in Eastern Nigeria, and even at Kaduna, Zaria and Kano in Northern Nigeria. (Members of these latter three branches, however, were almost only Southern Nigerians living in the North.) Still in 1938 the Movement held its first conference in Lagos attended also by representatives of regional organizations. The second such conference, held in 1940, already took up a number of questions which touched upon the problem of the whole population of the country. (Reform of the system of "indirect rule": Nigerianization of the public services; regional representation in the Legislative Council; problems of the peasantry; assistance to African business enterprises; labour conditions of the African commercial employees, etc.).

In 1939-1940, however, inner conflicts came to the surface in the Movement. The relationship between AZIKIWE and ERNEST IKOLI (one of the founders and leaders of the Movement) had been strained since 1938 when IKOLI launched a new paper, the *Lagos Daily Service*. AZIKIWE took offence because he regarded the new paper as a rival of the *West African Pilot* edited by him. To the personal enmity of the two leaders were added tribal differences, too (IKOLI hailed from the Ijaw, AZIKIWE from the Ibo tribe). This conflict became especially sharp in February 1941, when in a by-election to the Legislative Council IKOLI, as the Youth Movement's candidate,

<sup>1</sup> Their books published in New York were the following: MBADIWE, *British and Axis Aims in Africa*, 1942; ORIZU, *Without Bitterness*, 1944; OJIKE, *My Africa*, 1946; OJIKE, *I Have Two Countries*, 1947.



defeated AZIKIWE's and his adherents' candidate, AKINSANYA from the Yoruba (Ijebu) tribe, who was also a founder of the Youth Movement. This tension went so far that in February 1941 the Youth Movement split: AZIKIWE and his (Ibo and Ijebu) followers quit the Movement. Thereafter the Youth Movement still continued to function — now practically as an exclusive Yoruba movement — but displayed no particular activity. Though the Lagos leaders of the Youth Movement managed to come to an agreement with MACAULAY's Nigerian National Democratic Party and its youth association, the Nigerian Young Democrats, and to form a Joint Council, this co-operation was confined virtually to their agreement on the distribution of the seats on the Legislative Council and the Lagos Municipal Council. In addition to this agreement, the Joint Council took only one action we still know of: in 1943 it lodged a protest with the British Colonial Secretary because of the restrictive measures taken by the government against Nigerian students in England. In September 1943 MACAULAY resigned and the Joint Council went out of existence.

In contrast to the declining Youth Movement, dissenter AZIKIWE became ever more active in organizing the all-Nigerian independence movement.

#### *Initiatives of Azikiwe. Formation of the N.C.N.C.*

Early in 1942 AZIKIWE founded the Nigerian Reconstruction Group to study the political, economic, social and cultural problems to be solved in Nigeria after the war. The Group had fourteen members (two teachers, two union officials, one doctor, four students, and a few colonial officers). The members would have liked to see the establishment of a nationwide political organization ("national front"), but they thought that it had to be formed and directed by the Nigerian Youth Movement. They made several attempts to persuade the Movement leaders, but to no avail. The Group itself was working hard and prepared numerous studies on the problems of Nigeria and published them, in the name of AZIKIWE, in form of pamphlets at Lagos in 1943.<sup>1</sup>

In summer of 1943 AZIKIWE went to London upon an invitation from the British Council. During his stay there he and seven other journalists presented the British government their memorandum entitled *The Atlantic Charter and British West Africa*, to which the government failed to respond. After his return from London AZIKIWE wrote the then President of the Youth Movement, Dr. AKINTOLA MAJA, a letter stating among other things:

"Nigeria has very few friends in England . . . so far as our political aspirations are concerned . . . [We] must close ranks, work co-operatively and carry forward any reconstruction that is practicable, . . . show that we are able to rise beyond our minor internal differences, . . . most of our critics use that argument to prevent the realization of our aspirations."

In August 1943 AZIKIWE again started talks with leaders of the Youth Movement, proposing them that they launch a national campaign for the realization of the proposals set forth in the Reconstruction Group publications and in the memorandum submitted to the British government. But the Youth Movement leaders turned down this offer.

<sup>1</sup> *Economic Reconstruction of Nigeria; Political Blueprint in Nigeria; Taxation in Nigeria.*

The reason why the Lagos leaders of the Youth Movement were unresponsive to the plan of a nationwide movement lay both in personal motives and in matters of principle. They personally opposed AZIKIWE, whose journalistic activity had for years been a thorn in their flesh, and whom they held solely responsible for the 1941 split.

Beyond these personal differences, however, there were substantial conflicts between them as to the future of Nigeria and the pace of its political development. AZIKIWE, referring to the right of the peoples to self-determination, demanded self-government for Nigeria by a specific date (in 15 years from 1943, that is by 1958); on the other hand, the Youth Movement leaders thought self-government would be feasible only as a result of a long and gradual development, for which no definite time could be fixed.<sup>1</sup>

In November 1943 the Nigerian Union of Students<sup>10</sup> organized a mass rally for young people in a suburb of Lagos, Ojokoro, attended by hundreds in the presence of AZIKIWE and some Lagos leaders of the Youth Movement. The meeting adopted a number of resolutions on the future of Nigeria, so on the need for a "national front" as advocated by AZIKIWE.

In August 1944 some representatives of the Nigerian Union of Students went to see AZIKIWE. They told him that the Nigerian youth was ready to form a nationwide political organization, but it needed appropriate guidance. At the proposal of AZIKIWE and with the aid of his paper, the *West African Pilot*, the students called a conference of all existing associations with the purpose of forming a united nationwide organization. The Nigerian Youth Movement was also invited, but it refused to be represented. The conference began on August 26. It adopted a resolution stating among other things:

"Believing our country is rightfully entitled to liberty and prosperous life . . . and determined to work in unity for the realization of our ultimate goal of self-government within the British Empire, we hereby bind ourselves together forming the Nigeria National Council."

The Council was formed with HERBERT MACAULAY as President and AZIKIWE as General Secretary. The organization being joined by several groups from the Cameroons, it was soon renamed the "National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons" (N.C.N.C.).

The N.C.N.C. was not yet a political party constituted by individual members. Only trade unions could be affiliated to it.<sup>3</sup> The Nigerian Youth Movement and the greater part of the trade unions did not join the N.C.N.C. The unions kept aloof partly because the government forbade them to engage in politics, and partly because the Yoruba leaders of most of the trade unions viewed the N.C.N.C. policy as much too radical. The affiliated organizations were nearly

<sup>1</sup> In their memorandum presented to the Colonial Secretary in summer 1943 they formulated this stand as follows: "We are deeply conscious of the fact that self-government does not come by the mere asking for or granting of it. It is the final consummation of the political, economic and cultural state of a people." (J. S. COLEMAN, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, Berkeley, USA, 1958, p. 464. [Memorandum Submitted by the Nigerian Youth Movement to the Rt. Honourable Stanley, M.P., Lagos, 1943]).

<sup>2</sup> In 1943 the Nigerian Union of Students, formed by Abeokuta pupils in October 1939, had branch organizations in three towns in addition to Lagos.

<sup>3</sup> Affiliated to the N.C.N.C. immediately after its formation were the following organizations: two bourgeois parties (Democratic Party, Young Democrats), two trade unions, four literary circles, four professional groups (Herbal Institute of Medicine, etc.), eleven societies (e.g. athletic clubs), and 101 tribal factions (Ibo Union, Ijebu National Union, etc.).



all Southern Nigerian, mostly local branches based at Lagos. N.C.N.C. affiliations existed also in Northern Nigeria, but their active members were almost exclusively government or private officials, clerks or handworkers temporarily assigned to Northern Nigeria.

The rapid spread of the N.C.N.C. and the swift growth of its prestige and its influence upon the masses were largely due to co-operation between AZIKIWE and MACAULAY. The active participation of MACAULAY secured the support of the Yoruba masses of Lagos, and AZIKIWE brought with him the Ibos and the non-Yoruba elements of the Lagos population. MACAULAY's participation, however, had certain negative effects, too. His democratism, which was too moderate compared to AZIKIWE and his associates, acted as a brake on AZIKIWE's militancy, and at the same time turned against AZIKIWE and the N.C.N.C. the conservative high-class leaders of the Yorubas and the middle-class Yoruba intellectuals opposed to MACAULAY.

In January 1945 the N.C.N.C. held a Constitutional Conference which adopted the programme of the organization, laying down the tasks as follows:

"To extend democratic principles and to advance the interests of the people of Nigeria and the Cameroons under British mandate.

"To impart political education to the people of Nigeria with a view to achieving self-government.

"To provide NCNC members with the medium of expression in order to secure political freedom, economic security, social equality, and religious toleration in Nigeria and the Cameroons under British mandate, as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations."

It is characteristic that the programme adopted by the Conference said not a word about independence, nor about the appointed date of self-government proposed by AZIKIWE in 1943.

#### *Awolowo's Initiatives*

In connection with the war-time development of the Nigerian independence movement, and thus with the decline of the Nigerian Youth Movement, special mention should be made of AWOLOWO's activities in the war years.

In June 1940, at an initiative and with the help of AWOLOWO, young educated Yorubas, cocoa traders and lorry owners revived the Nigerian Youth Movement. During the next four years this group of AWOLOWO was very active and busy arranging debates, drawing up plans, and organizing analogous groups in a number of Western Nigerian towns.

AWOLOWO and his group formed ideas which were essentially different from the conceptions entertained both by the Lagos leaders of the Youth Movement and by AZIKIWE. Sharply criticizing the Lagos leaders and the entire policy and organizational principles of the Movement, they demanded that the Youth Movement be reorganized on a regional basis in conformity with the administrative division of Nigeria, and that central leadership be given into the hands of a National Council formed by elected representatives of the Regions. According to this conception, the first "regional conference" of delegates from the Western Nigerian branches of the Youth Movement was summoned and put through by AWOLOWO in 1942. The discussions had two main items: the demand for a constitutional reform (central government with an African majority, extension of the suffrage) and the call for a reform

of "indirect government" by means of democratization and harmonization of the "Native Authorities".<sup>1</sup>

The second such regional conference held early in 1944 passed a resolution censuring the Lagos leaders of the Movement and setting up a provisional committee to conduct the affairs of the movement until the All-Nigeria Representative Council met later in that month. Before the proposed meeting could have taken place, however, AWOLOWO left the country. He went to England to complete his studies in law, and the reorganization of the Youth Movement was abandoned.

#### *Reform Plans of the Colonial Administration*

Not even during the war years was any noteworthy progress made towards independence or self-government at least. The colonial administration was well aware of the need for some reforms. Immediately before the outbreak of the war, still in 1939, British Governor BERNARD BOURDILLON forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies a memorandum suggesting that Africans should also be placed in responsible posts of the colonial administration; greater autonomy and responsibilities should be allowed the traditional "Native Authorities" (chiefs and tribal organs); the number and weight of unofficial members in the Legislative Council of the Colony should be increased. In 1942 the same Governor added three unofficial members, two Africans among them, to the Executive Council under his presidency. In September 1942 he drafted a new reform proposing that, beside the central Legislative Council, "regional councils" be set up in the three Regions of the colony (Eastern Nigeria, Western Nigeria, Northern Nigeria) and these councils be composed of both elected and traditional representatives of the "Native Authorities". The proposals submitted by BOURDILLON in 1939 and 1942 remained on paper until the end of the war. It was not until March 1945 that Governor ARTHUR RICHARDS, who had replaced BOURDILLON in 1943, submitted another draft constitution, which — as we shall see later — passed into law after the war's end. Compared with BOURDILLON's recommendations, however, the reform signified one step back rather than forward.<sup>2</sup>

#### *Sierra Leone*

Sierra Leone played an important strategic role in the war: the port of Freetown served as a transit station for the Atlantic convoys of the Allies. As is known, Freetown has one of the best natural harbours in the world. GUNTHER writes that on one occasion during the war no fewer than 250 ships were anchored there simultaneously.<sup>3</sup> Also, the war interests of Britain demanded that the colony increase its production (palm oil and palm kernels, iron ore). The British colonial authorities squeezed the pliers of taxation and often used compulsion to get the Africans to work. To ensure the collection of taxes and the organization of forced labour in the territory of the

<sup>1</sup> As AWOLOWO declared, "What we of the Nigerian Youth Movement are visualizing is a Nigeria of tomorrow in which the various linguistic units of Nigeria will federate to form a single nation. But such is impossible if each little native authority is separate from and totally independent of the rest."

<sup>2</sup> See p. 199

<sup>3</sup> *Inside Africa*, p. 743.



Protectorate (where 94 per cent of the country's population lived), they enlisted the help of the chiefs in their pay, who, with the tacit consent of the administration (if not upon its direct instructions), resorted to cruel, barbarous methods. The wives and children of tax delinquents were detained as hostages, and the men themselves were subjected to flogging and torture. A frequently applied method of torture was to rub pepper and salt on their skins. On May 24, 1941, in connection with a similar scandalous case the Rev. REGINALD SORESEN in the House of Commons put questions to the Colonial Secretary, who had to admit that in the case in question, which had been also officially investigated, the police in Bumbuna in the Northern Province had tortured four Africans in the manner described above. The Secretary added that the perpetrators had been dismissed from service and committed to trial.<sup>1</sup> How many such cases occurred during the war and remained unpunished is anybody's guess.

In May 1943 the British Governor introduced a new kind of tax, this time income tax. The presentation of the Bill to the Legislative Council so much exasperated the African population that the unofficial members of the Council, who otherwise — since seven of the ten unofficial members were nominated by the Governor — had always voted in favour of the administration, this time unanimously opposed the Bill. This, of course, could not prevent its enactment, because official members constituted a majority in the Legislative Council. (From 1923 the Council had 21 members: 11 official appointees, 7 unofficial nominated members and 3 elected members from the Creoles of the coast district.)

For lack of political organization the peoples of Sierra Leone during the war waged no organized political struggle against the regime of colonial oppression and exploitation. They had set up their first political society more than a year before the outbreak of World War II: in 1938 they formed, under the leadership and on the initiative of T. A. WALLACE JOHNSON,<sup>2</sup> the Sierra Leone group of the "West African Youth League", which pressed for economic, political and social reforms and set itself the task of attaining self-government for Sierra Leone in the framework of a West African federation. Still before the outbreak of war, the League founded the "Sierra Leone Trade Union Congress" and won co-operation from a number of other unions. The League and the Congress were the first organizations in Sierra Leone which united the workers of the coast district (the "Colony") and the Protectorate for common goals and with a common programme of action. However, the colonial authorities, which smelled danger in the uniting of Africans, after the outbreak of the war arrested WALLACE JOHNSON and several leaders of the Trade Union Congress, and deported them from Freetown to the mainland region for the duration of the war.

If the independence movement made no headway during the war, the labour movement made considerable progress: the year 1943 witnessed the birth of the "Sierra Leone Mineworkers' Union" under the leadership of SIAKA STEVENS,<sup>3</sup> and this union underwent considerable development already in the war years.

During the war there was no change in the colonial administration. The only "reform" introduced in that time (1943) was that the Executive Council, which, from

<sup>1</sup> Cf. GEORGE PADMORE, *Africa: Britain's Third Empire*, London, 1949, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. II, p. 243.

<sup>3</sup> SIAKA PROBYN STEVENS was born in the Moyamba district of the Protectorate in August 1905. Graduated from the Albert Academy of Freetown. From 1923 till 1930 he worked as a clerk in the Sierra Leone police.

1923, had invariably consisted of colonial officials appointed by the Governor, was completed with two unofficial African members who, however, were likewise appointed by the Governor.

### *The British Mandated Territories in West Africa*

The war brought no essential change to the British mandated territories in West Africa (Togoland and the Cameroons), except that the British colonialists here, just as in all their West African colonies, introduced measure after measure to increase the production of agricultural crops and other primary materials of great importance for the conduct of the war (cocoa, groundnuts, tobacco and raw cotton in Togoland; palm oil and precious timber sorts besides cocoa and coffee in the Cameroons).

In the first few years of the war (1939–1942) there was no noteworthy event in the liberation movement of the peoples of these territories either. A change came in this field in the year 1943 with the formation of the Cameroons Youth League under E. M. L. ENDELEY<sup>1</sup> and the Togoland Congress Party.

In spring of 1945 an Oxford graduate hailing from British Togoland, DANIEL AHMLING CHAPMAN, who at that time taught at Achimota College in the Gold Coast, launched a monthly periodical under the title *Ewe Newsletter*, in which he spoke for a union of the Ewe tribes split into three parts. For the same purpose and at the same time the movement known as the All-Ewe Conference was started, which demanded union of the Ewe tribes and self-government for the united Ewe people.

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<sup>1</sup> EMMANUEL MBELA LIFAFFE ENDELEY was born at Buea in April 1916. His father was chief of the Bakwiri tribe. ENDELEY received primary education at Buea and at the Bojongo mission, later went to secondary school and then qualified in medicine. From 1943 till 1946 he worked as an assistant doctor at Buea, Port Harcourt and Lagos. In 1947 he became secretary of the Cameroons Development Corporation Workers' Union and displayed busy activity there. The trade union soon attained the membership figure of 19,000. In 1948, when a UN Visiting Mission was in the Cameroons, he organized a strike which ended with the victory of the workers (a considerable wage increase). In 1949 he was elected President of the Union. As a delegate of the Cameroons he attended the Nigerian constitutional conferences at Enugu in 1949 and at Ibadan in 1950.



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## CHAPTER III

### THE UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

#### *Position and Role of the Union of South Africa in World War II*

The Union of South Africa was of capital importance for England during the war. In times of peace, too, it was one of Britain's largest suppliers of food and raw material. And the British government expected the Union to fill this role still more efficiently during the war.

By reason of its geographical position and features the Union of South Africa was one of the most important strategic bases of Britain. It was strategically important for three reasons: (a) as a supplier of war materials, (b) as a naval and air base, (c) as a source of human supply for the armed forces.

The accession to power of SMUTS's pro-British party substantiated the British expectations regarding the Union of South Africa. With the backing of the British armed forces, SMUTS managed to oust from the administration the overtly fascist Nationalists for the duration of the war. The ousting of these elements, however, did not weaken South African fascism. Groups of South African landowners and capitalists, who sympathized with the German nazis and demanded an outright racist policy, were mushrooming ("Grey Shirts", "Ossewa Brandwag", Broederbond", "New Order", etc.). SMUTS was satisfied that they did not interfere with the government's war measures, but he never thought of standing up against them. Thus the course he followed in internal politics was only too welcome to the Nationalists.

This circumstance and the fact that the war-time boom enormously increased the profits not only of British business interests but of Afrikaner landowners and capitalists had as a result, on the one hand, that the Nationalists became self-conceited and, on the other, that those two strata of the South African ruling classes again got closer together.

#### *Government Crisis and the Formation of the Smuts Cabinet*

The outbreak of World War II provoked a government crisis in the Union of South Africa. Headed by Prime Minister HERTZOG, the Nationalists in the cabinet and within the United Party in power refused to support Britain's war. HERTZOG submitted to Parliament a motion demanding that the Union observe neutrality. SMUTS objected and proposed that the Union stand by Britain and declare war on Germany. In the ensuing fierce debate SMUTS's position won through. Votes against HERTZOG's motion, that is for a declaration of war, came from all United Party members of British extraction and the moderate elements of Afrikaner representatives, further from a few Labourites and Dominion Party members as well as three



(European) so-called "Native representatives" (MOLTENO, MARGARET BALLINGER and G. K. HEMMING). Backed up by the intransigent Nationalists of the United Party and by MALAN's opposition Nationalist Party of twenty-two members, HERTZOG was defeated by seven votes.

This is how, the day following the British declaration of war, the Union of South Africa also declared war on Germany. HERTZOG was compelled to resign, and the Governor-General appointed SMUTS Prime Minister. To give the war cabinet of his party the character of coalition, SMUTS included in it one leader of the Labour Party (W. MADELEY) and one of the Dominion Party (C. F. STALLARD).

#### *The Parliamentary Parties and the Settlers' Organizations during the First Stage of the War*

When resigning from the government, HERTZOG, together with his followers, withdrew also from the United Party and went into opposition. The SMUTS government was thus confronted with two opposition parties, HERTZOG's group and MALAN's Nationalist Party. Although HERTZOG and MALAN entertained different ideas about the future of the Union, they took the same stand on the most important issue of the moment, the question of war, both being on this point in disagreement with the SMUTS government. And since members of both parties demanded a closer association of the forces of opposition, both Nationalist leaders had to yield under pressure from the membership, and so in 1940 the Nationalist Party which had split as far back as 1933 was again united under the style of "Reunited Nationalist Party".

But this unity was not long to last. A new split occurred in the Reunited Nationalist Party at the end of that year, when HERTZOG, on the one hand, and the Party's Federal Council influenced by MALAN, on the other, drafted two different programmes for the party. In contrast to HERTZOG's more moderate nationalist programme, the MALAN draft contained ultra-nationalist goals (proclamation of the Republic by a simple parliamentary majority of Nationalist votes, abolishment of the equality of political rights for the English-speaking settlers, etc.). The two programmes were submitted to the Orange Congress of the party, when the MALAN programme had already been adopted by the Cape Town Congress of the party. And as the majority of the delegates to the Orange Congress also were in favour of MALAN's programme, HERTZOG with HAVENGA and a few associates walked out of the congress, which then unanimously adopted the MALAN draft. The procedure was repeated later at the Transvaal Congress presided over by STRIJDOM and VERWOERD, who proposed in addition that the party refuse to admit Jews to membership. HERTZOG and HAVENGA resigned as members of Parliament, but when they tried to win the next by-elections, they were defeated. The ex-members of the Nationalist Party thereafter formed the Afrikaner Party under the leadership of HERTZOG and HAVENGA.

In October 1941 HERTZOG surprised his followers with another about-face: he stood up and made propaganda for HITLER's national socialism, claiming that it was most suited to Afrikaner national traditions and customs. Later, after HERTZOG's death in October 1942, the leadership of the Afrikaner Party passed into the hands of HAVENGA.

The ousting of HERTZOG and his followers from the government, far from weakening, rather strengthened the groups sympathizing with the fascists and semi-fascists.

The fact that SMUTS had hired himself out entirely and unreservedly to British imperialism drove also many of the moderate and half-hearted elements into the fascist camp.

The Nationalist Party, which still under HERTZOG had tolerated fascists (PIROW!) in its ranks and then drew closer to fascism under MALAN, took an outright fascist course especially after HERTZOG's death. The already existing fascist associations became increasingly active during the war.

Of major importance among them was the Broederbond founded already on the morrow of World War I. It strove for a union of all Afrikaners, to heighten their national consciousness, to ensure their absolute influence in political, economic and cultural matters. Its programme included the demand for full independence for South Africa, an end to the foreign (meaning British) exploitation of the natural resources of the country, total "Afrikanization" of public life and public education, and segregation of all "non-White" races.

The Broederbond was not a mass organization, which it did not even intend to be (in 1944 it had altogether 2,672 members). Its membership was organized in small branches (of not more than twenty each) throughout the country, which admitted new members only upon recommendation of at least one member and with the consent of all the others. Although every member was free to profess his affiliation openly, the Broederbond was a secret society, so far as it did not disclose its membership list, and members were forbidden to mention in public another member's affiliation to the society. Nevertheless, it was an open secret that nearly eighty per cent of the Nationalist representatives and the overwhelming majority (if not all) of the members of the Nationalist cabinet belonged to the society.

It was SMUTS himself who branded the Broederbond as fascist when in December 1944, at the Bloemfontein Congress of the United Party, he said that the society was "a dangerous, cunning, political fascist organization of which no civil servant, if he is to retain his loyalty to the State and the Administration, can be allowed to be a member". A few days later, on December 15, 1944, the government announced that civil servants (including teachers) who were members of the Broederbond must either withdraw from that organization or resign from the civil service. (Needless to say that this instruction was never carried out in earnest.)

Another major fascist organization was the Ossewa Brandwag (Oxwagon Fire-Guard). It had been formed in 1938, on the centenary of the Great Trek. Its members wore special outfits and, organized in "commandos", underwent regular military training. Their aim was to achieve secession of the Union from the British Commonwealth and to make it a purely Afrikaner Republic. Despite this, the SMUTS government did not disband the organization. All it did was prohibit them from wearing uniforms and take into custody a few too loud-mouthed members. No doubt, most of the acts of sabotage that took place during the war were engineered by this organization or the various secret societies under its influence.

By and large the same purposes and activities were pursued by PIROW's New Order group and the Grey Shirts, an overtly fascist and pro-Hitler organization led by WEICHARDT.

Still another broad-based fascist society was the Federation of Afrikaans Cultural Societies (F.A.K.), formed at the initiative of the Broederbond as early as December 1929, originally for the purpose of cultural propaganda. By 1939 it had more than three hundred affiliated organizations, one third of which were cultural clubs and the rest were church organizations, charitable groups, student and youth groups,



scientific study circles, and educational organizations. From that time, however, the society entered the economic and political fields, too. In 1939 it founded the "Economic Institute", and somewhat later the "Afrikaans Commerce Institute". Other organizations set up by the F.A.K. and placed under its control were the "National Council of Trustees" (entrusted to conduct Nationalist propaganda among members of the Afrikaner mineworkers' unions) and the "Institute for Christian National Education".

An organization of similarly fascist character was the "Reddingsdaadbond" controlled by the F.A.K. It was formed in 1938, on the centenary of the Great Trek, with the rubble-rousing slogan of directing a "Second Great Trek" of the Afrikaner people; a hundred years before the Boers had been compelled to leave their towns and settle in desert country, now they should go back to the towns. In other words, the impoverished Afrikaner farmers ("poor Whites") ought to be settled in industrial centres and trained for skilled labour. The speakers at the first congress of the organization in July 1941, as well as the pamphlets written by its leaders, depicted the distressing situation of the impoverished elements of the Afrikaner community. This, they said, threatened the whole Afrikaner nation with destruction, but they concentrated the fire, not against the landlords and manufacturers who had waxed rich on the exploitation of the African and European workers and small producers, but against the Indian traders and artisans. The authors argued that the Afrikaners, while outnumbering the Indians five times,<sup>1</sup> were toiling as workers in the towns, but the Indians had five thousand more trade licences and kept shops of their own.

The Reddingsdaadbond was especially active during the war years, when it endeavoured to place the draft-dodging pro-Nazi Afrikaner adherents of the Nationalist Party in factories enlarged thanks to the war-time boom, and in jobs with commercial enterprises, to replace those who had been called up.

#### *The Attitude of the African National Congress*

The outbreak of the war put the Africans in a dilemma. Their overwhelming majority viewed the war against fascist Germany as a struggle against the racist system and held that this struggle as such deserved support. At the same time, however, an argument against this support was provided by the fact that during the war years the Smuts government pursued the racial policies of its predecessor and that, while bringing the Africans to enlist in the armed forces, it refused to place weapons in their hands and employed them only for trench-digging and lorry-driving. At the Durban general meeting of the African National Congress in December 1939, a committee set up to prepare a draft resolution recommended that the meeting declare that in case the African soldiers would be armed they would be ready to support the government's war efforts. But the resolution was adopted in a milder form, with amendments proposed by Chairman XUMA. The document stated that Parliament's decision to enter the war was right, but it said also that it was time the government had considered granting the Africans and the other non-European groups the totality of civil rights, and that the territorial integrity of the country could be effectively protected only if all strata of the population had equal rights to participate in the system of home defence.

<sup>1</sup> FRITZ STEYN, *Die Bron van ons Elende* [The Source of Our Misery].

Of course, this softened resolution produced no positive effect. The government made no concession to the African masses, and the attitude of the African National Congress was too passive to stimulate them.

#### *The Attitude of the Communist Party. Dadoo's Role and Imprisonment*

In the first stage of the war the Communist Party and its leaders — among them the well-known freedom fighter of Indian descent, Dr. DADOO — took a stand against support to the government. They advised the African and Indian masses against joining the army and called upon them to fight for their rights and against racial discrimination. Dr. DADOO issued a leaflet addressed to the non-European populations, in which he wrote:<sup>1</sup>

"You are being asked to support the war for freedom, justice and democracy. Do you enjoy the fruits of freedom, justice and democracy? What you do enjoy is pass and poll-tax laws, segregation, white labour policy, low wages, high rents, poverty, unemployment and vicious colour-bar laws."

In July 1940 DADOO was arrested and brought to trial under the war-time laws. Still before the trial big mass demonstrations took place in Johannesburg and Durban. Thousands of Africans and Indians demanded DADOO's release. At the trial DADOO said that the people would not regard the war as one waged for democracy and the eradication of fascism until democratic rights were extended to all non-Europeans of South Africa and until India and the other colonial countries attained independence. The court sentenced DADOO to a fine of £25 or one month in jail with hard labour and, as a supplementary punishment suspended for two years, to two months' imprisonment with hard labour.

A few months later DADOO was again arrested and sentenced to four months in prison incommutable to fine, the charge against him being that at the Benon location he had incited against the government.

DADOO's speeches and statements expressed the view of the most conscious elements of Africans and Indians. His imprisonment roused broad masses to awareness and action. There were scarcely any streets in Johannesburg and Durban where slogans (written in large letters in chalk or charcoal) demanding DADOO's release did not appear at the walls time and again.

#### *The Change in the Character of the War as Reflected in the Political Life of South Africa*

The attack by Hitler Germany on the Soviet Union and the Soviet entry in war substantially changed the character of the conflict. The fighting that had until then been a wrangle between imperialist powers became a war carried on against world fascism by an alliance of the Land of Socialism and the democratic capitalist powers. This turn of events caused a shift also in the political life of South Africa. The South African Communists, who had refused to support the war conducted in the interest of British imperialism and had therefore made propaganda against recruiting non-Europeans for the army, now changed their minds: they summoned the African, Coloured and Indian masses to give unconditional support to the government's war efforts and endorsed the demand which the greater part of the masses had not ceased

<sup>1</sup> EDWARD ROUX, *Time Longer than Rope*, p. 316.



to voice since the outbreak of war, "Arm the non-European soldiers!" The overwhelming majority of Africans, Coloureds and Indians adopted the same position.

The SMUTS cabinet, though persisting in its refusal to give arms to Africans, in the changed situation was compelled to relax a bit, for a while at least, its policy of terror pursued against Africans — and Communists. Although neither the African organizations nor the Communists had for a moment stopped agitating against racial discrimination and especially the pass system, the government had to put up with this, since this agitation was consistently coupled with propaganda for support to the war efforts of the government. The police terror also subsided somewhat. For example, the Communist JOFFE brothers (Dr. MAX and LUDWIG JOFFE), who had been in jail for several months, were set at liberty in September 1942. True, now and then the police arrested one or another Communist, but they were soon released upon orders from higher up. This happened, for instance, to the General Secretary of the Communist Party, MOSES KOTANE, who, in November 1942, was apprehended at Bloemfontein where he held a legitimate propaganda meeting during the electoral campaign for the "Natives Representative Council".

The only group which, in addition to the fascist societies (Broederbond, Ossewa Brandwag, New Order, Grey Shirts) and the pro-fascist Nationalist Party, in this stage of the war continued to speak against supporting the antifascist war was the faction of South African Trotskyites, which exerted influence mainly on the Cape Coloured intelligentsia and on some circles of educated Indians of Natal. For example, an Indian intellectual of Durban, D. A. SEEDAT, who, having fallen for Trotskyite propaganda, incited against the war, in April 1942 was put in jail and in July was released on condition that he should abstain from any antigovernment activity, from participating in political meetings, and should report to the police every week. Since, however, SEEDAT failed to comply, he was again arrested in September and sentenced to forty days in prison. But Trotskyite propaganda had no effect on the African masses. Only on one occasion did it succeed in making trouble in the unified mass movement of non-Europeans. At the Port Elizabeth Conference of the "Non-European Unity Movement" in 1942, where the Communists proposed that the conference demand in a resolution the opening of the European second front, the Trotskyites who had made their way into the meeting took the floor and managed to make the conference reject the draft and adopt a resolution demanding that non-Europeans should not join up because the war served imperialist interests.

Characteristically, the SMUTS government, which in the first stage of the war arrested and imprisoned one after another the Communists and Africans who spoke against the war, did nothing during the entire course of the war to arrest the Trotskyites<sup>1</sup> campaigning against the war or to ban any of their newspapers. At the same time the post office regularly accepted the copies of the officially licensed paper of the Communist Party, the fortnightly review *Inkululeko* published in the Bantu language, but, following a secret order from the censorship, it did not deliver them to the subscribers. When in February 1944 this unlawful action transpired, the chief censor had to admit the fact and rescind his order.

<sup>1</sup> The only Trotskyite who was arrested during the war (in May 1940) was MAX GORDON, but the reason for it was not his Trotskyite activities but his doings in the Joint Committee of the trade unions (see p. 58–59). The Trotskyite E. ROUX, in his book *Time Longer than Rope* (p. 321), says that the explanation of this indulgent policy of the government with regard to the Trotskyites was that the government regarded their movement as too insignificant to be worth suppressing. The truth is that the reason why the South African governments had always been tolerant towards Trotskyism was that they saw in it a suitable means of disrupting the unity of the mass movement of Africans, Coloureds and Indians.

## The 1943 Elections

During the war new parliamentary elections were held in July 1943. Besides the government party (the coalition of the United Party, the Labour Party and the Dominion Party), three opposition parties put up candidates: MALAN's Nationalist Party, HAVENGA's Afrikaner Party, and PIROW's New Order faction. (This time the Ossewa Brandwag did not take part in the election.) The elections resulted in an overwhelming victory of the government. SMUTS's United Party won 89 seats (as against the former 70), the coalition obtained 105 seats (or 110 including the "Native" and "Independent" representatives), MALAN's Nationalist Party received 43 (as against the former 40). Neither the Afrikaner Party nor the New Order got a single seat.

SMUTS's sweeping election victory convinced MALAN, on the one hand, of the momentary futility of his extremist foreign policy line and, on the other, of the fact that the split of the Nationalists played into the hands of SMUTS, for it pushed a part of the moderate elements of the Afrikaner Party into the camp of the United Party. (Of the former 24 seats of the Afrikaner Party 22 went to the United Party and only two to MALAN's). This led MALAN to back off from his extremist demands (proclamation of a Republic) for the time being. The Afrikaner Party in turn, moved by its defeat at the polls and by MALAN's less rigid policy, saw fit to get closer to the Nationalist Party. The rapprochement between the parties of Afrikaner nationalism was visible at the Wakkerstrom by-election held in April 1944, where the candidate of MALAN's party was backed up by the Afrikaner Party just as well as by the Grey Shirts and PIROW's New Order, and even by some members of the Ossewa Brandwag.

## National Movements of the Africans in the Second Stage of the War. The Marabastad Riot (December 1942)

In autumn of 1942 the Wage Board, in view of the considerable price increase, decreed a certain rise in the wages of African municipal workers from the beginning of November 1942. The municipal authorities of Pretoria failed to obey the decree. Towards the end of December the African workers of the Marabastad compound in Pretoria began to grumble and demanded that the decree be given effect. The European superintendent of the location, in order to abate the public feeling, called a meeting and fed the people with the promise that the wage differences would be paid later. But the crowd of 2,000 was not satisfied and voiced their demands more and more loudly and even made threats (a subsequent inquiry established that they had stoned the superintendent). The police were summoned to disperse the crowd, and when this proved ineffective, soldiers were called in. As the crowd resisted, the soldiers opened fire on the unarmed people driven into the courtyard of the location. Thereupon the Africans tried to escape through the single narrow exit door, but the soldiers did not stop firing. The casualties suffered by Africans amounted to 14 dead and 111 wounded, and one soldier was killed.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> As was stated by the subsequent inquiry, this soldier had been knocked down before the fire was opened, and this might have caused the soldiers to open fire. Whether this was how it happened is highly questionable.



Being apprised of the event, SMUTS expressed his "deep sorrow" over the "tragic occurrence" and set up a commission of inquiry. The commission had to state that, in view of the unlawful action of the Pretoria municipality, there had been reason for the African workers to complain, but the firing had been unnecessary,<sup>1</sup> what is more, "the situation did not warrant the interference of a body of seventy-eight soldiers with firearms". To allay the discontent of the African municipal workers, the commission thought necessary to apply three measures: (1) to improve the living conditions in the compounds, (2) to provide the Africans with representation on the municipal council, (3) to recognize the non-European trade unions.

The government took note of the report, but the proposals of the commission remained pious wishes.

#### *"Bus Strikes" in 1943*

Alexandra is a township lying about fifteen kilometres from Johannesburg. It is one of the few places where Africans were allowed to acquire landed property. This explains why its population grew so rapidly, especially during the war, and reached the figure of 60,000 by early 1943. The majority of the inhabitants had jobs in Johannesburg, commuting by buses operated by private companies. Up to August 1943 the single fare cost 4d. In August 1943 the companies, invoking the high prices under war conditions, raised the fare to 5d. with the consent of the Transportation Board. The Africans started a boycott right away. None of the Africans took a bus. Those working in Johannesburg, about 15,000 in number (apart from the few who had cars of their own or who were given a lift in lorries), walked the way to the city and back. As a result, in the morning and the evening hours, the northern main road leading to Johannesburg was completely jammed with people. This first "bus strike" lasted nine days. The bus companies were compelled to call off the fare rise.

The government sent out a commission of inquiry. The commission in its report stated that "transport charges, in relation to the workers' wages or even to the total family income, are beyond the capacity of the African workers to pay. Indeed, it may be said that they cannot afford to pay anything. They certainly cannot pay anything more in any direction except by reducing still further their hunger diet." The final conclusion drawn by the commission was that since segregation was forced on the Africans by the Europeans, "the transportation of the Africans is . . . very much a financial obligation of the Europeans".

These reasonable findings of the commission, however, came too late. Still before the report was made public, the bus companies, in view of the "emergency", had again raised the fare to 5d. and advised the Africans to collect the extra 2d. a day from their employers.

The inhabitants of Alexandra refused to follow this advice, for it might have helped at best only those having permanent jobs, but it was no solution to the problem of casual workers, washerwomen, children, visitors, and people looking for work; moreover, it would have resulted in the greater part of the Alexandra workers losing their jobs, because the employers would have hired workers living nearer the city. The second bus strike started on November 14, 1944, and lasted two weeks.

<sup>1</sup> More precisely, the commission found that there might have been some reason for firing off the first shots when the European soldier was (allegedly) killed, but that it had been entirely needless to continue the firing.

From what a lecturer of Johannesburg University wrote about the second bus strike we gather the following picture:<sup>1</sup>

It was a hard fight but the Alexandra workers stood the test heroically, and the result could not fail to come. At the end of December the bus companies were compelled to revert to the 4d. fare.

The result and the significance of the bus strikes far exceeded what the Alexandra workers attained for their own benefit. The first strike was still a spontaneous mass movement and was thoroughly unprepared. But already during the first strike an "Emergency Committee" was set up, representing certain European sympathizers, Communist Party leaders and African trade unionists in addition to leading figures of the African community in Alexandra. The second strike, on the other hand, was prepared and had the support of a large committee of action representing numerous African and pro-African organizations. Many Europeans expressed their sympathy by giving lifts to the strikers until they were stopped by officials of the Transportation Board.

The news of the bus strike spread all over the country and made broad masses of Africans aware that union could bring them results even in the dire conditions prevailing in South Africa.

#### *Formation and Failure of the African Democratic Party*

The success of the bus strikes stirred up the political life of Africans. The strike days brought about a good many initiatives. At that time the so-called African Democratic Party was formed in Johannesburg. This, however, despite its high-sounding name, did not promote, but rather slowed down, the start of the African mass movement. The founder of the party, Senator H. BASNER, declared that the African National Congress was "played out" and a new mass organization was needed. But the efforts of the leaders of the new party to talk the African masses out of supporting the African National Congress were of no avail. In fact, after the bus strike the African National Congress, which, as is well known, displayed no special activity in the first few years of the war, broke with its passive attitude and, as will be seen below, was soon to lead the African masses into battle. The African Democratic Party failed to win the masses and vanished from the political scene before long.

#### *The Johannesburg Riots*

In November 1944 serious clashes occurred between African and European workers in Johannesburg. The Western Native Township on the outskirts of the city is separated by a road from the European workers' districts Martindale and Newclare, a home to the poorest section of Afrikaners. There is tramcar and bus traffic in the streets. Special cars are reserved for Europeans and others for Africans, but the drivers are all European. On a Sunday afternoon of November 1944, the European driver of a tramcar carrying African workers knocked down and killed an African. The angry African crowd that assembled on the spot threw stones at the tramcar and at the motorcars of Europeans driving past the scene of the accident. The Europeans then launched a barrage of stones at the buses transporting Africans, whereupon the

<sup>1</sup> E. Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 327.



Africans assaulted the tramcars carrying European passengers. A veritable street battle started, and the police were summoned to the scene. The police dispersed the African crowd with tear-gas bombs, but did not prevent the European participants in the riot, who proceeded to the building of the paper *Bantu World*, from destroying the printing machines and the supply of newsprint and setting fire to the premises.

As to the causes and character of what happened, a pertinent appraisal was given by the monthly review of the South African Institute of Race Relations, the *Race Relations News*, which commented on the events in these terms:

"Apart from certain incidents connected with the accident which resulted in a young African being killed . . . and the natural resentment of the African people against rising prices and the lack of such staples as meat, there appear to be other forces at work disposing them to seek redress for grievance in organised direct action of various kinds, which may in time become uncontrolled violence. On the other hand, the means used in the destruction of the premises and printing plant of the *Bantu World* by Europeans after two previous attempts indicate organized use of violence by Europeans, of which the riot was not the cause but the opportunity."<sup>1</sup>

#### *The Story of the Orlando Shanty Town*

The war created a particularly grave situation for the African population. As a result of the large-scale development of the war industries, further thousands of Africans migrated towards the towns. The situation in the already overcrowded "native locations" in the suburbs of Johannesburg and other industrial centres became increasingly untenable, all the more so as the municipalities right after the outbreak of the war had called off all building projects intended to improve the housing conditions of Africans. In the last few years of the war thousands of Africans remained without shelter in the "native locations" established in and around Johannesburg, the biggest industrial centre of the country.

Under the leadership of JAMES SOFAZONKE MPANZA, a member of the Advisory Board, several thousand inhabitants of Orlando, one of the largest such overcrowded Johannesburg locations, started a mass exodus to the neighbouring field and, without permission from the authorities, built there huts of tree branches, rags, tin plates, etc. This is how the shanty town of Orlando came into existence. The new settlement was joined by thousands upon thousands of Africans from other locations of the neighbourhood. The Johannesburg City Council did not bother them for a while, and even worked out plans of new housing schemes for the dwellers of the shanty town. But nothing came of these plans, and even new clashes took place between the shanty townspeople and the police, which gave occasion for the deportation of MPANZA.

#### *Anti-Pass Agitation in 1944-1945*

Towards the end of 1943 the African National Congress called upon the Africans to fight against "the Africans' enemy No. 1", the pass law. Throughout the country local anti-pass committees were set up and preparations were made to convene a national anti-pass conference.

<sup>1</sup> Quoted from ROUX, *op. cit.*, p. 324.

The conference, which was held in Johannesburg on May 20 and 21, 1944, was attended by 540 delegates representing 605,222 Africans.

On this occasion a mass demonstration took place in the streets of Johannesburg with the participation of twenty thousand people. The conference adopted a declaration stating that the pass laws:

1. increased political oppression and economic exploitation for millions of the African population;
2. added to the abject poverty of the African toiling masses, facilitated the spread of diseases and, while causing thousands of innocent people to get into prison, were breeding crime;
3. created sharp racial friction between the peoples of South Africa;
4. retarded the economic and industrial development of the country, and
5. were thus in conflict with the high aims for which the peoples of South Africa were shedding their blood.

The conference resolved to stage anti-pass demonstrations throughout the country, to launch a campaign to obtain a million signatures to an anti-pass petition which a deputation of African leaders would submit to the government by August 1944. The organization of the campaign was entrusted to the Anti-Pass Council and Working Committee, with Dr. XUMA as Chairman, Dr. DADOO as Deputy Chairman, and D. W. BOPAPE as Secretary.

As the conference abided by the legal formalities in every respect, the authorities had no excuse for interference. But to ensure repression after all, they ordered D. W. BOPAPE, who taught at a mission school, to be dismissed. Thereupon the residents of the Brakpan location where the school was situated responded with a strike of warning. Parents of the schoolchildren raised the slogan, "No Bopape, no school!" Since the Brakpan town council which had dismissed BOPAPE made no move, all workers living in the township decided on a general strike. On August 10, 1944, seven thousand African workers failed to turn up to their jobs. The strikers demanded that BOPAPE be immediately reinstated and that the manager for "native affairs", who masterminded BOPAPE's removal, be dismissed. Still in the course of that night a representative of the town council called in the strike leaders and told them that BOPAPE would be rehabilitated and other grievances of the strikers would be immediately examined. Next day the strikers returned to work.

The town council failed to keep its word. Neither BOPAPE was reinstated, nor the manager for "native affairs" was dismissed. The people protested, but to no avail. Some proposed another strike, but the leaders differed in their opinion and no strike came. BOPAPE continued in his function as Secretary of the Anti-Pass Council.

The signature campaign, even if it was not a complete success, brought some results. If not a million, at least hundreds of thousands of signatures were collected, among them a good number from Europeans. The campaign was rather drawn out, so that the petition was presented as late as June 1945 instead of the proposed date of August 1944. The Anti-Pass Council commissioned a deputation to present the petition, and this requested an interview with J. H. HOFMEYR, who acted as Prime Minister while SMUTS was away in Europe. Referring to his manifold occupation, HOFMEYR refused to see the deputation and directed them to the Minister of Native Affairs. But the deputies did not feel like it, and instead held a meeting with the participation of five thousand Africans to protest against HOFMEYR's "undemocratic refusal to meet the Anti-Pass Deputation representing some million Africans", and following the meeting the participants marched in demonstration to the build-



ing of Parliament. The police arrested their leaders, among them Dr. DADOO, R. V. SELOPE THEMA and S. MOEMA, and fined them for "leading an unlawful procession".

Although the campaign brought only meagre results, its propaganda reached hundreds of thousands of Africans, thus greatly contributing to awakening the African masses to national consciousness.

The movement did not come to an end yet. The anti-pass campaign continued and, as will be seen below, soon became activated again.

#### *The National Movement of Indians during the War. The "Pegging Act"*

The national movement of the Indians of South Africa underwent a remarkable development in the war years. Before the war the movement of Indians and their organizations (South African Indian Congress, and the local Indian congresses of Natal, the Transvaal and the Cape) were almost completely isolated from the movements of the Africans and the Coloureds. The first serious step to co-ordinate the movement of the Indians of South Africa with the movement of the other oppressed South African peoples was taken in 1939, when upon the initiative of Dr. YUSUF DADOO, who was a militant member of the South African Indian Congress, Indians, Africans and Coloureds organized joint demonstrations of protest against a new racist bill which would have made it possible for the "White" population of any South African town or village to pass a decision by a three-quarters majority to remove all non-European members of the community (in other words, the new act was intended to extend to the Indians and the Coloureds those measures of dispossession which had been applied to Africans by the Urban Areas Act of 1923). The movement ran so high that the government was compelled to withdraw the bill. This success of the joint action was of great significance for the future progress not only of the national movement of Indians but also of the independence movements of all oppressed South African peoples. From that time on Dr. DADOO played an outstanding role both in the movement of the Indians and in all liberation movements in South Africa.

The situation of the Indian minority of Natal worsened during the war. Until 1943 the Indians in Natal had been free to acquire landed property without any restriction. In 1943, however, the SMUTS cabinet, giving as a pretext that between 1940 and 1943 the Indians had made large-scale purchases of land in the European districts of Durban, tabled in Parliament a bill forbidding the Indians to buy or lease from Europeans any property in the territory of Durban, and declaring that this measure might, "in case of necessity", be extended to other townships as well.<sup>1</sup> As the passage of the bill elicited protest both from the Indians of Natal and from the government of India, the SMUTS cabinet began to negotiate and proposed a compromise solution,<sup>2</sup> which, instead of enforcing prohibition, would have only called upon the Indians to abstain of their own accord from buying landed property. This agreement, however, did not come about, because this milder formulation of the deprivation of rights aggrieved the Indians and did not seem satisfactory to the Europeans of Natal either.

<sup>1</sup> Trading and Occupation of Land (Transvaal and Natal) Restriction Act (No. 35, 1943), commonly known as the "Pegging Act".

<sup>2</sup> The Pretoria Agreement, 1944.

#### *The Coloured Movement during the War*

The national organizations of the Cape Coloureds, which had been fairly active during the thirties (especially the National Liberation League and the Non-European Unity Movement), did not display any noteworthy activity in the first years of the war, and their movement was at complete stillstand between 1939 and 1943.

In 1943, in view of the forthcoming elections, the government passed a number of measures to enlist the support of Coloured voters. First of all, it set up a new agency, which was originally styled "Coloured Advisory Department". This body consisted of twenty appointees of the government and was designed to inform the government of the problems of the Coloureds and to make recommendations for the improvement of their conditions. The government thought to win thereby the support of all Coloured voters. But it was disappointed in its calculations. The establishment of the Advisory Department not only did not unite the Coloureds but caused a sharp division among them. The majority of the Coloureds looked upon the new institution with dislike, being convinced that it meant nothing but to invigorate the vicious policy of racial division and of discrimination against the population.

Seeing that the new institution raised the most violent outcry yet among the Coloureds, the government tried to make amends by changing the name of the agency from "Coloured Advisory Department" to "Coloured Affairs Council" (C.A.C.) and by persuading Dr. H. Gow, a popular Cape Town clergyman and music teacher, to accept chairmanship on the Council, and a number of other Coloured leaders to serve as members. But the majority of the Coloured leaders and the masses backing them could not be deceived. They refused any kind of co-operation with the Coloured Affairs Council.

Nevertheless, at the 1943 elections the majority of the Coloured electorate gave the vote to the government, since in most of the electoral districts the only choice was between SMUTS's government party and the Nationalist Party professing the policy of apartheid. But the anti-C.A.C. campaign had not been without effect. It resulted in a considerable shift to the left in the Coloured movement. Splits occurred even in so traditionally conservative groups as the Coloured Teachers' Association, from which a great part of the members resigned and formed a new, radical organization, the Teachers' League of South Africa.

#### *Disintegration of the All-African Convention.*

##### *The Anti-C.A.C. Movement.*

##### *The Non-European Unity Movement*

During the war years a growing Trotskyite influence prevailed in the leadership of the All-African Convention.<sup>1</sup> Trotskyite leaders of the Convention in December 1943 made an attempt to amalgamate the African National Congress and the Convention. The Congress repelled this attempt and broke with the Convention, which thus became a wholly Trotskyite organization. On December 17, 1943 (Dingaan's Day), the Convention and the leaders of the Anti-C.A.C., which was also directed

<sup>1</sup> The African National Congress also was affiliated to the All-African Convention which had been formed to fight against HERTZOG's anti-African laws in December 1935 (see Vol. II, p. 165). The bulk of the members of the Convention were Cape Coloureds under strong Trotskyite influence, which gave rise to internal conflicts already in the pre-war years.



by Trotskyites, called a Conference to Bloemfontein, and there they founded the "Non-European Unity Movement". Starting out from the demagogic principle that "White domination" in South Africa would be able to endure only if the non-Europeans co-operated with the administration, the leaders of the movement set themselves the task of uniting all non-European groups of South Africa in a single federation with the slogan of "non-co-operation". To this end they worked out a ten-point programme which in fact demanded all basic freedoms and equal rights for all non-Europeans;<sup>1</sup> but the programme had no practical significance, considering that the leaders of the movement neither offered nor proposed any active or passive resistance, for they took the view that this step would not be possible until all non-Europeans united and started a general strike throughout the country. Since this view was not shared by the militant organizations of non-Europeans — notably the African National Congress and the South African Indian Congress — the movement was essentially nothing more than a bloc of two Trotskyite organizations, the All-African Convention and the Anti-C.A.C. All the Convention did was that, when it came to the election of the Natives Representative Council and of the Native Authorities assigned to the Reserves, it called upon the Africans to boycott the election, but with little result. GWENDOLEN M. CARTER made the pertinent comment on this movement that "at the moment the Non-European Unity Movement has created more disunity than otherwise".<sup>2</sup>

*Strike Movements of Africans during the War. The African Trade-Union Movements at the Start of the War. Gordon's Role and Internment*

Just before the outbreak of war the trade-union movement of Africans took a vigorous upsurge, but it lacked in unity. In 1938 in Johannesburg a Joint Committee of African trade unions was set up under the leadership of two Trotskyites, the African D. GOSANI and the European MAX GORDON. The Committee originally rallied the unions of baking, printing, commercial and laundry workers. Later three newly formed unions (chemical, dairy, and general workers) joined the Committee, which in 1941 had over ten thousand members. The same year another union group led by the African MAKABENI and the unions affiliated to the Joint Committee, with the financial and moral support of the South African Institute of Race Relations, formed a co-ordinating committee, the aim of which was to rally in a federation all African trade unions, but unity did not come about, and the two groups continued to function separately.

In May 1940 one of the Joint Committee leaders, GORDON, who was at the same time Secretary of the Commercial Workers' Union, was arrested and interned. The trade-union leaders requested an explanation from MADELEY, the Labourite Minister of Labour in the SMUTS cabinet, and demanded GORDON's release. MADELEY, saying it was not his business, referred them to the Minister of Justice. The South African Trades and Labour Council raised the question officially, too, but had to return empty-

<sup>1</sup> (1) Suffrage and eligibility for all persons over twenty years of age; (2) compulsory and free education for every child up to sixteen years of age; (3) inviolability of the person and privacy of the home; (4) freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and freedom of association; (5) freedom of movement and freedom of occupation; (6) full equality of rights without distinction of race, colour and sex; (7) revision of the land problem; (8) revision of the citizenship laws; (9) revision of the system of taxation; (10) revision of labour legislation.

<sup>2</sup> ROUX, *op. cit.*, p. 361.

handed both from the Minister of Justice and from other authorities, without even being apprised of the charge brought against GORDON.

GORDON was released in 1941. He went back to the Rand, where he organized trade unions, but the threat of another internment soon compelled him to leave Johannesburg.

Still less unified was the trade-union movement in the Cape. The Typographical and the Engineers' Unions were affiliated with the African Trades and Labour Council, minor independent unions mostly rallied in the Cape Federation of Trades. They were mixed unions, which admitted non-Europeans, too (the majority of the members were Coloured workers), but the leaders were Europeans who cared little for the admission of non-Europeans. In the years preceding the war, however, a change came about here as well. The guidance of some of the organizations affiliated with the Cape Federation of Trades, and later also the leadership of the Federation itself, fell into the hands of left-wing elements, in part Communists, who formed a large number of new unions and pursued a completely different policy: they not only admitted but endeavoured to unionize non-European workers in the first place. The leaders of numerous new unions came from among the Africans or the Coloureds.

The most efficient of all in the Cape was the non-European Railway and Harbour Workers' Union, which had been formed in Cape Town in 1935, then gradually set up branches all over the country and by 1943 counted more than twenty thousand members.

The left-wing (Communist-led) trade unions in Natal rallied African, Indian and European workers. The strongest among them was the Natal Sugar Industry Employees' Union embracing Africans and Indians.

*The Johannesburg Conference of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions (November 1942)*

In November 1942 the first Conference of the Council of Non-European Trade Unions was held in Johannesburg with the participation of 87 delegates representing 29 unions. The Conference was attended also by Minister of Labour MADELEY, who delivered the opening address, but this served no useful purpose, for he said right at the outset that official recognition of the African unions was out of the question because there were still "many difficulties" to overcome. Nevertheless the Non-European Trade Union Federation strengthened further during the war.

*The 1942 Promises of Smuts. Beginning of the Strike Wave.*

*The Strike of the African Public Utility Workers of Johannesburg*

Early in 1942 when, as we have seen, the participation of the Soviet Union in the war, on the one hand, and the looming menace of a Japanese invasion, on the other, led the Union government to adopt at least apparently milder policies towards the trade unions (including the Communist-led ones), African, Coloured and Indian alike, SMUTS stated in public that he intended to have an amendment passed to the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 to the effect that African workers also should be included in the organs established by law for the consideration and settlement of labour-management disputes. This promise and the general softening of the government's racist and anti-labour policies gave rise to a whole series of economic strikes



of African workers, mainly on the Witwatersrand and in Natal, in the second half of 1942. Participating in these strikes were railway labourers, dockers, coal miners, as well as workers of brickyards and dairy plants, candy factories and public utility services. Most of the strikes were directed by trade unions, but a great many strikes were started by unorganized workers, without preparation and spontaneously. The most significant of them was the strike staged by the African employees of the Johannesburg municipality. The way the strike broke out was this. The Wage Board fixed for unskilled African workers a weekly 24s. This meant a 60 per cent rise on the wages paid until then by the Johannesburg City Council to African workers. The City Council said they were unable to pay so high wages and appealed to the Minister of Labour, requesting exemption from the decree of the Wage Board. The Minister of Labour granted the exemption, whereupon the Africans went on strike. The strike lasted only one day, but was crowned with complete success: the Johannesburg municipality was compelled to comply, and other utility enterprises which appealed to the Minister for similar exemption met with flat refusal.

#### "War Measure 145"

The retaliatory measures of the government, however, were soon to come. SMUTS not only forgot about the promises he had made not long before, but at the end of 1942 he promulgated "War Measure 145" branding as illegal "all strikes of all Africans in all circumstances" and punishing violators with imprisonment. Afterwards, when the Japanese peril was over, the government issued another regulation against the African workers, "War Measure 1425", forbidding — and making it a crime — to hold, without permission from the authorities, any meeting of more than twenty persons, thereby making it more difficult for the African workers to discuss their petty annoyances among themselves and in a lawful manner.

#### *The 1943-1944 Strike Wave. Strike at "Victoria Falls Power" in August 1944*

However, the government's idea of checking by these measures the African trade-union movement proved a complete failure. Between the promulgation of War Measure 145 (end of 1942) and December 1944 the African workers in the Union conducted about sixty strikes, with more or less success, though mostly in vain because of the government terror. Thus, for example, when in August 1944 the workers of "Victoria Falls Power" struck, the government reacted by arresting the strikers and sending out members of the "Native Military Corps" as strike-breakers.

#### *Non-European Trade Union Conference in 1945*

At war's end in 1945, the next Conference of the Non-European Trade Union Federation was held. At that time the membership of the unions affiliated with the Council of Non-European Trade Unions numbered over 150,000.<sup>1</sup> However, the

<sup>1</sup> As can be seen from the September 15, 1945, issue of the bulletin published by the Institute of Race Relations, the number and the membership of the unions affiliated with the Council were as follows (quoted from ROUX, *op. cit.*, p. 341):

affiliated trade unions, despite their formal unity, were connected with different political organizations. Part of them functioned under Communist direction, others were under the influence of Trotskyites or of the African Democratic Party. The Trotskyites made great efforts to seize the direction of the Council, but to no avail. In 1945 the Communist JOHN MARKS, Secretary of the African Mine Workers' Union, was elected to the general-secretaryship of the Council.

#### *Movements of African Mineworkers during the War*

The African workers of the mining industry were worse off than those employed in any other trade. The minor measures that protected to some extent the interests of African workers (e.g., the provisions of the Wage Act of 1925) were not applicable to the miners. In the absence of any organization, their interests remained without protection.

In contrast to other industrial sectors, where African workers had the chance of combining in larger or smaller unions (which were in most cases *de facto* recognized by the employers and the authorities), the formation of trade unions encountered great difficulties among the African miners recruited mostly from the reserves and living in closed compounds practically under surveillance.

In the second year of the war some African political figures handed the Prime Minister a petition requesting him to extend to the African miners the cost-of-living allowances granted to workers of other trades. The Board of Trade and Industries supported the petition, but the Prime Minister rejected it.

On August 3, 1941, a conference convened at Johannesburg to discuss the establishment of a miners' union. The conference, which was attended by representatives of all important African trade unions, received assurances of support from a number of white unions, too. It is worth mentioning that the paramount chief of Zululand sent the conference a telegram of felicitation.

The conference appointed a fifteen-member committee and instructed it to use every means it thought fit "to build up an African Mine Workers' Union in order to raise the standards and guard the interests of all African mine workers".

The committee set to work immediately, the Union did come into being and by early 1943 grew so strong and fought so energetically for recognition that the government deemed it necessary to establish a Commission to study the working and wages conditions of African miners.

The African Mine Workers' Union presented the Commission a memorandum informing it of the situation and the grievances of African miners and demanding official recognition of their trade union.

The memorandum of the Mine Workers' Union was published in full by a number of South African papers. The mining companies sued those papers for libel, claiming

	Unions	Membership
Johannesburg	50	80,000
Pretoria	15	15,000
Bloemfontein	10	5,000
Kimberley	5	3,000
East London	10	15,000
Port Elizabeth	19	30,000
Cape Town	10	10,000
	119	158,000



that the memorandum published by them contained false statements and that the papers, by propagating them, raised difficulties in the way of the recruiting of African mine labourers. The South African courts consisting exclusively of European settlers "did justice" to the mine owners and imposed severe fines on the papers. The *Guardian*, for example, against which four mining companies had brought libel suits, had to pay £750 damages in each of four cases, and paid altogether £6,000 in damages and costs.

Libel cases were also started by the mining companies against Senator H. BASNER and W. G. BALLINGER, who were accused of having committed perjury before the Commission. The manager of the mines' police for New Consolidated Goldfields Ltd., TRIGGER, sued BASNER for £1,000 in damages for what he thought was insulting to him in the Senator's testimony before the Commission. Judge MURRAY, who was in charge of the case, while giving judgment against BASNER and awarding £50 damages, was nevertheless compelled to state in the judgment that "the method adopted by the plaintiff to safeguard the interests of the mining industry was to insinuate a spy into the councils of the Native Union . . . a method which . . . leaves behind an unpleasant taste", and said that "Communism in theory is entirely legal and permissible according to the laws of this land, and the Native Mine Workers' Union on the evidence before me is a perfectly legitimate association, even if — which has not been proved — its leaders were Communists or inclined to Communism."<sup>1</sup>

The political nature of the actions instituted against BASNER and BALLINGER was so obvious that the court of appeal acquitted BASNER, and the public prosecutor withdrew the charge laid against BALLINGER.

The report of the Commission was made public in April 1944. It recommended an increase per shift from 10d. to 16d. for underground workers and a rise of 5d. per shift for surface workers. It proposed furthermore the introduction of a cost-of-living allowance of 3d. per shift and a boot allowance for thirty shifts, a two-week paid leave per year and a fifty per cent extra rate for overtime. The Chamber of Mines undertook — for the event of state support — to grant an increase of 5d. to underground workers and 4d. to surfacemen and to pay overtime rates. (Namely, the state allowed the mine owners a tax deduction to the amount of these increases.) Other recommendations of the Commission went unheeded.

The African Mine Workers' Union strengthened further and by the middle of 1944 had several thousand members. The government could not look on with folded arms: in December 1944, by resorting to the provisions of War Measure 1425, it arrested the General Secretary of the Union, J. B. MARKS, with two other trade-union functionaries at Durban, and a few days later P. VUNDI and W. KAMYE at Springs. (It is interesting to note that the court later acquitted and released all of them because — although the police had acted on the strength of War Measure 1425 — the charge brought against them was not fully consistent with the provisions of the law.)

#### *End of the War. The Return of Smuts*

The peoples of South Africa shouldered the burdens and hardships of the war in the hope that war's end would mean to them the beginning of the end of their suffering. An imposing expression of this hope was the march of twenty thousand African workers enthusiastically proceeding through the streets of Johannesburg during the People's Day of Victory celebration organized by the Non-European Trade Union

<sup>1</sup> Roux, *op. cit.*, p. 342.

Federation, the African National Congress and the Communist Party of South Africa.

The Union government, however, took care to splinter the hopes of the people. Evidence of its proposed policy towards the African workers was the official communiqué which fixed the severance pay for ex-servicemen as follows:

£5 in cash and £25 clothing allowance for Europeans;

£3 in cash and £15 clothing allowance for Coloureds;

£2 in cash and a Khaki suit worth £2 for Africans.

In September 1945 SMUTS returned from Europe. In Johannesburg he was given a festive reception with the slogan "Thank you, General Smuts". In front of the Johannesburg City Hall a large crowd assembled, including many Africans, to welcome and to hear the leader of the Union. But shortly before SMUTS arrived on the scene, the military police detailed to the festivity attacked the Africans and drove them away with blows and kicks. "Thus symbolically it was demonstrated that though the war for world freedom had been won, black men and women must not forget that they have to keep their place."<sup>1</sup>

#### *The Economic and Political Situation in the Union of South Africa at the End of the War. The Balance-Sheet of the War for South Africa*

The Union of South Africa, led by the SMUTS government in power, had loyally stood on the side of Britain in the war from beginning to end, suffering heavy material sacrifices and loss of lives in the interest of the victory of Great Britain — and the Allies. This enormous sacrifice in lives was made almost exclusively at the expense of the African population of the country. The ruling classes of South Africa — the Afrikaner and British capitalists and landlords — had very little share in it.

The sacrifices, besides contributing to the victory, had positive results also for the Union of South Africa. But these results benefited only the ruling classes. The capitalist economy made a big leap forward, while the profits of industrialists and the income of landowners went up.

In addition to the positive results, the war had negative consequences, too. These, however, again exclusively affected the African — and other non-European — masses of the population: the extent of exploitation grew, national oppression increased.

Despite all this, the sacrifices suffered during the war years were not in vain for the Africans and other oppressed strata either. In those years there was considerable progress in the national liberation movement of Africans as well as in the struggle of the Indian minority for equal rights. Old forms of the national movements were revived (anti-pass campaign, "riots", etc.), and at the same time new, hitherto unknown, forms of protest appeared (bus strike, shanty towns). The trade-union and strike movements of African workers also strengthened.

#### *The British "Protectorates" in South Africa during World War II*

During World War I, the British had made promises of political concessions and economic reforms to induce the peoples of the South African Protectorates to support the war of British imperialism. As we have seen before, the Basutos volunteered by

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 325.



hundreds for military service and collected £50,000 for the purposes of war.<sup>1</sup> They had done so in the hope that as a reward for their loyalty the British colonizers would better understand and be concerned with the grievances and aspirations of the peoples of the Protectorates. But they had been disappointed in this hope (their situation had not improved after the war). What is more, as we have seen, their conditions grew considerably worse in the years of the economic crisis.<sup>2</sup> Yet the British imperialists during World War II again succeeded in inducing them to support their war efforts. This time they managed to achieve this by promising them that those enlisted would carry arms, in contrast to what had been the case in World War I, and would not be discriminated against. The Bechuana and the Basuto chiefs recruited soldiers in large numbers expressly for armed service on the front. But the British imperialists again broke their promises. On the insistence of the rulers of the Union of South Africa (who feared mutiny among the Africans recruited from the Union in case the Basutos and Bechuana would receive arms), they gave no arms to the soldiers coming from the Protectorates either, but detailed them to the digging of entrenchments and other hard work, often using them even as cannon fodder.

The first six Bechuana companies, after a short drilling, were sent to Syria in September 1941. In December 1941 already 13 Bechuana "labour companies" were at the Near East front (Egypt, Syria, Lebanon). Two additional companies joined them early in 1942 and twelve more towards the end of that year. Bechuana troops took part in the landing in Sicily and in the Italian campaign, in the course of which they lost many dead and wounded. Bechuana Paramount TSHEKEDI visited the Bechuana troops in Egypt. The soldiers reproached him for having encouraged them to volunteer for the army with the promise of armed service, and now they were forced to work unarmed often in places where they were exposed to enemy bombings. After returning to his country, TSHEKEDI strongly protested to the British authorities, but to no avail. The Bechuana troops served till the end of the war, and were not demobilized until April 1946.<sup>3</sup>

Of the three Protectorates, only in Basutoland was there an organized mass movement during the war. There the protest against the annexationist policy of the Union government between the two wars led to the formation of a national organization called the "League of the Poor" (*Lekholla la Bafo*). In the first few years of the war, the League launched a violent campaign demanding the arming of the Basuto soldiers recruited for military service. At the end of 1941 the British authorities arrested and interned three leaders of the movement (JOSIEL LEFELA, HLAKE MOKHITLI and RAPOHO NTHAJANE). In spite of this, the campaign under RABASE SEKIKE continued for half a year. In July 1942 the authorities arrested him, too, and all four of them were detained in custody until the end of the war.

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<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, pp. 45-47.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. II, pp. 159-162.

<sup>3</sup> A. SILLERY, *The Bechuanaland Protectorate*, London, 1952, pp. 131, 213-216.

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South East Africa during World War II was of extreme value to Britain as a source of strategic materials and food supply. Southern Rhodesia furnished chromium, asbestos, wolfram and mica, Northern Rhodesia gave copper and cobalt to the armies of the Western allies, and all three colonies (the Rhodesias and Nyasaland) provided meat and maize to England and to the British troops fighting on the African fronts. The economic development of the British colonies in South East Africa in that period was characterized mainly by the forcible expansion of production in agriculture and the mining industry. Besides, the war-time conditions brought about considerable structural changes in the economies of these countries (especially Southern Rhodesia). The shortage of commodities owing to the steep decline of the importation of manufactured goods led to the establishment of a great number of industrial plants (first of all, processing factories). Metallurgy, the metal-working and chemical industries considerably augmented their output, new cotton mills were built, etc. Another important change was that industrial and agricultural production and goods distribution came under the central control of newly created state monopoly agencies (Maize Marketing Board, etc.).

Besides producing strategic raw materials and agricultural crops, the African population of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland took its share also of military service. The colonial authorities of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland recruited "native troops" which then served under arms in the coast areas of Africa and in other, more distant, regions (the Nyasaland troops, for example, were dispatched to Malaya). In Southern Rhodesia, just as in the Union of South Africa, Africans were drafted into the army, but they received no arms and were detailed to ambulance companies or some other auxiliary service as carriers and so on.

The troops of Southern Rhodesia and the Union of South Africa were placed under the Joint High Command headed by General SMUTS, Prime Minister of the Union. Britain badly needed these forces — and in general the support of the Union of South Africa — for the defence of her African colonial empire. Making good use of this situation, the SMUTS government stepped up its propaganda for annexation of the British possessions in South East Africa to the Union. In the early years of the war, when the military successes of fascist Germany put Britain in such a dangerous situation that she could not do without the support of South Africa, the British government shut its eyes to the nefarious propaganda of the South African ruling quarters. As the war went on, however, and the immediate danger menacing Britain was over, the British government gave SMUTS to understand that the annexation by the Union of the British possessions in South East Africa was out of the question.



In 1944 SMUTS had to make a solemn declaration affirming that his government did not intend to annex those territories, but wanted only to build closer contacts with them in the interest of the war efforts.

The material handicaps of the war weighed upon the Africans in all three countries. While the mining companies, the big European farmers and plantation owners benefited from the war by increasing their profits, for the Africans the war meant high consumer's prices and low marketing prices, worsening living and working conditions, merciless taxation and labour, starvation and poverty.

The colonial administration itself was aware of the untenable situation of the African masses, but did nothing to alleviate it. To check mass discontent, as will be seen below, it made promises for the future and appointed commissions to examine the situation of the Africans. These commissions made certain suggestions which, however, were unrealistic or never put into practice. Right at the start of war, for example, the British government commissioned Lord HAILEY to study the "native policies" in the Central African colonies and submit his recommendations. The peer discharged his commission, but his report and proposals were not even made public by the government.

The aggravation of the situation and the experiences of the war in general made the African masses aware of the necessity to fight their way. The war gave an impetus to both the labour and the independence movement. This made itself felt above all in strikes which, though bringing no material benefits, made the workers conscious of their need for organization in all three territories and even gave occasion to the formation of a trade union in Southern Rhodesia. (In the other two colonies only preparations were made for establishing trade unions.)

The times of war were unfavourable for the development of the independence movement. Only in Nyasaland did this movement take an organized form during the war. The spread of the idea of independence was greatly promoted by the fact that broader and broader masses of the African populations of all three colonies became aware of the danger of their countries being blended in a future federation under the rule of the European settlers of Southern Rhodesia. The Southern Rhodesia settlers, who, since the institution of self-government (1923), had been dreaming about complete independence and the annexation of the other two Central African colonies, loyally supported the British war efforts, hoping that the British government after the war would help them to carry out their designs. Their endeavours to achieve independence and to merge the three colonies found justification in SMUTS's plan of annexation which, if approved by the British government, might definitively frustrate their efforts. The spectre of a fusion of the three colonies under the racist Southern Rhodesia regime stirred the African masses to action and prompted them to start fighting against the federal plans.

For a while during the war the fight could not unfold, but preparations were under way in all three countries. In the last stages of the war the idea of national independence struck deep roots everywhere, and the forces of the independence struggle waited only for the end of the war in order to go into battle.

#### *Southern Rhodesia*

The economic changes mentioned above became visible first of all in Southern Rhodesia where the war years not only brought on a rapid growth of the food industry, the spinning and weaving trades, the garment and shoemaking industries and the

manufacture of building materials, but there appeared also the first considerable units of heavy industry, iron and steel works and machine factories. This circumstance and the ultra-racialist policies of the settler government of Southern Rhodesia may be mainly responsible for the fact that the conditions of the African masses here were the worst of all among the three British colonies in South East Africa.

Of the conditions of Africans, and mainly of African workers, a convincing picture was drawn by the inquiry conducted from August 1942 until June 1943 by the Rev. PERCY IBBOTSON,<sup>1</sup> Secretary of the Native Welfare Society. From what numerous employers and many thousands of Africans (altogether 26,553 persons) replied to his questionnaires, IBBOTSON concluded:

More than half (51 per cent) of the African workers received less than 30s. a month, and 15.7 per cent drew even less than 20s. a month;

the monthly subsistence wage of a married African worker with two young children was £4 15s, and only 8.8 per cent of the married workers received such wages or more;

the African workers paid 25 to 38 per cent of their wages on rent;

the war-time shortage of goods and the rising prices made it an unattainable luxury for Africans to buy the most essential clothing.

Hardly had IBBOTSON's survey been completed when, early in 1943, a member of the Southern Rhodesia Labour Party submitted a motion to the Legislative Assembly: the government should be urged to introduce a statutory minimum wage for African workers. After a heated debate the Legislative Assembly, instead of accepting the proposal, appointed a Committee headed by E. G. HOWMAN, a retired high colonial official, to examine the economic, social and health conditions of Africans in urban areas. In its report<sup>2</sup> submitted in January 1944 the Committee not only corroborated the findings of IBBOTSON, but established in addition that a great part of the African families were on the verge of famine; that, although the government in September 1941 had instituted a cost-of-living allowance of 2s. 6d. per month to its employees, this example had been followed by so few of the settler employers that not more than 5 per cent of the African workers received this allowance, which otherwise was still far from keeping pace with the rising costs of living (according to the labour officer of the government, an allowance of at least 7s. 6d. a month would have been an adequate amount, because since 1939 the prices of clothing had risen twofold and the food prices had also increased considerably); that the urban African workers were living everywhere in intolerably overcrowded quarters, workers with their families being accommodated in common rooms with unmarried people. The Committee proposed that the Africans working in the towns should receive the minimum wage of 20s. a month with specified rations and free accommodation.

To the proposals of the HOWMAN Committee the government responded by appointing another team, consisting of Cape Town social scientists headed by Prof. EDWARD BATSON, to calculate the lowest cost of an African household in Salisbury to provide "a minimum level of health and decency". BATSON listed as "essentials" only the minimum requirements of food and clothing, fuel, lighting, and cleaning materials, making no allowance for such items as rent, transportation, furniture, blankets, crockery, etc. Even so he arrived at the conclusion that the minimum needed was £7 7s. 4d. a month for a family with two children and £3 2s. 5d. for an unmarried

<sup>1</sup> P. IBBOTSON, *Report on a Survey of Urban African Conditions in Southern Rhodesia*, Bulawayo, 1943.

<sup>2</sup> "Report on Urban Conditions in Southern Rhodesia", in *African Studies*, Vol. IV (1945).



African. Considering what IBBOTSON had found a year before, that half of the married workers received wages under £3 a month and 51 per cent of all African workers earned less than £1 10s., and that the wages had remained unchanged throughout that year, BATSON's survey pointed to a catastrophic situation.

BATSON's findings and recommendations, just like those of IBBOTSON and of the HOWMAN Committee, remained a dead letter. Instead of fixing statutory minimum rates on which subsistence could be achieved, Prime Minister HUGGINS introduced to the Legislative Assembly a bill authorizing the Governor to compel the local authorities to set aside "native urban areas", and the settlers employing African workers either to accommodate them with their families in the workplaces or to hire accommodation in the "native areas".

This first, seemingly positive, proposal made by HUGGINS to improve the conditions of African workers was in fact a further step to tighten control over Africans living in urban areas. Namely, a provision of the law made the settlement of Africans in urban areas dependent on the permission of the local authorities, and obliged the Africans to register themselves at the local employment bureau or the "Native Department" to be set up by the municipalities and to take out certificates, and commissioned the authorities to exercise permanent control over the African workers through these agencies and "qualify" them at their own discretion.

HUGGINS's proposal met with opposition from several sides in the Legislative Assembly. Part of the settler representatives (Labourites among them) objected that the proposal put too great a burden on the employers, others found that it departed from the policy of segregation adopted by the settlers and the government. In his reply to the latter objectors, however, HUGGINS was quick to state that they were mistaken — the policy of segregation was to continue in force.

RICHARD GRAY pertinently pointed to the unrealistic nature of the proposed legislation, stating that the government was in a position to force the local authorities to carry out the proposed measures, while the realization of the plan did not depend on them, but required the co-operation of the employers and the availability of houses for married Africans in any given area.<sup>1</sup>

The bill took more than two years to be put into force at last in 1946 under the title of Native (Urban) Areas Accommodations and Registration Act.

The putting into operation of new industrial plants and the increase of agricultural production required further cheap African labour, and the settlers' government did its best to force further masses of the African peasants living in the reserves or farming on their own to hire themselves out to the mines and factories or to plantations and farms. The primary means of this compulsion was to curtail again the Africans' right to the use of land. The Land Apportionment Act of 1930 was "redrafted" in 1941 so as to tighten still more the system of racial segregation (established on the model of the Union of South Africa). The law forbade "natives" to buy, lease or possess land in European areas.

In 1945 this act was further amended to apply more severe measures of segregation.

"No owner or occupier of land in the European Area, or his agent, shall (1) dispose or attempt to dispose of any land to a native; (2) lease any such land to a native; (3) permit, suffer or allow any native to occupy such land."<sup>2</sup>

Since the African peasants were unorganized and the entire African population was deprived of all civil rights, neither the peasant movements nor the national inde-

pendence movement could unfold during the war years. There were minor spontaneous movements and local economic strikes of African workers (a strike of asbestos mine workers, several railway strikes), but they brought no result, and up to war's end no serious strike movement occurred because of the lack of organization among African workers. Although the first African trade union (railway workers) had formed during the war, in March 1944, its first effective move, in form of a general strike of the railway workers of Southern Rhodesia, did not take place until after the end of the war, in October 1945.

In the first few years of the war the opposition Rhodesia Labour Party which, in the Legislative Assembly elected in 1939, had all in all seven seats as against 23 representatives of HUGGINS's United Party, courted the favour of African workers. (However, two of its leaders, DAVIES and KELLER, accepted portfolios in the HUGGINS cabinet during the war.) The party congress in March 1940 adopted a resolution demanding the fixing of minimum wage rates and maximum working time, declaring that the Labour Party and the trade union had the duty of promoting and guiding the organization of African industrial workers. But the congress said nothing about the lack of political rights of Africans and the racial policies of the government.

On September 10, 1941, the National Executive Committee of the Labour Party, upon the demand of a group of African qualified voters with CHARLES MZINGELI<sup>1</sup> at their head, agreed to the formation of the Labour Party "African Headquarters Branch", which freely admitted any African as a member on an equal footing with Europeans. At the party congress in October 1941 Africans took an active part in the debates. A great many party members, however, disagreed with the Executive Committee decision and protested against the participation of Africans. The question remained unsettled until early in 1944. In February 1944 the African Branch held in Harare a two-day conference to which European members were also invited. The conference discussed, among other things, the African workers' right to join the existing (European) trade unions. The European party members attending the conference warned the Africans that the European union leaders would hardly agree to the admission of African workers and advised them to form separate African unions, reassuring them that the European "Trades and Labour Council" would recognize them and recommend their recognition by the government, since the establishment of African unions was in the interest of European workers, too.

Obviously it was under the effect of this conference that a month later the first African union (railway workers) came into existence. Another outcome of the conference<sup>2</sup> was an offensive of the opponents of African participation. One of the party leaders, H. DAVIES (who had resigned from the cabinet in order to restore party unity), in April 1944 demanded that the question be reconsidered and the Africans expelled from the party on the ground that their membership jeopardized the party's influence and was repulsive to European voters; then he launched a campaign with a

<sup>1</sup> CHARLES MZINGELI was born at a Plumtree district mission in 1905. At the age of fourteen he ran away from home and took up jobs as a railway worker at various places in Southern and Northern Rhodesia (Bulawayo, Livingstone, Broken Hill). In the years 1929 to 1935 he was an active organizer of the Southern Rhodesia section of the Industrial and Commercial Workers' Union led by KADALIE. (The movement went out of existence after its leaders had been arrested in 1935).

<sup>2</sup> The Harare conference had also a third consequence: following the conference the Salisbury City Council banned all political meetings of Africans.

<sup>1</sup> R. GRAY, *The Two Nations*, London, 1960, pp. 281-282.

<sup>2</sup> CLUTTON-BROCK, *Dawn in Nyasaland*, 1959, pp. 67-68.



view to winning all party members for his position, ensuring thereby party unity. Part of the members, however, kept to the September 1941 decision, and this issue caused a *de-facto* split in the Labour Party. But no decision was reached until the war's end.

#### *Northern Rhodesia*

The war years brought boom to the economy of Northern Rhodesia. Britain's growing needs of copper<sup>1</sup> necessitated the maximum increase of the output of the copper mines of Northern Rhodesia. At the outset of the war these mines employed 2,000 European and 20,000 African workers, whose number by 1944 rose to 3,000 and 30,000 respectively.<sup>2</sup>

The war-time boom notwithstanding, the conditions of African workers went from bad to worse. In 1939/40, according to the WILSON survey conducted in Broken Hill, 70 per cent of the African workers earned less than 20s. a month (30 workdays), 10 per cent of them being juveniles who received less than 10s.

At the beginning of 1940 the unionized European mineworkers' strikes brought them the grant of a war-time bonus in addition to their wages many times exceeding those paid to Africans, and forced the mining companies to abide by the "colour-bar" principle (not to engage Africans in skilled jobs). That was the last straw: in March 1940 the African workers of several mines, about 15,000, went on strike, demanding 5s. daily wages and the improvement of working conditions. On April 3, it came to a clash between 3,000 striking miners of the Nkana mine camp and the police and troops ordered out against them. The latter used tear gas and also fire-arms, the Africans defended themselves with clubs and stones. The toll among Africans amounted to 17 dead and 65 wounded, and also 20 policemen and soldiers were injured. The mining company, with the help of the authorities and by employing strike-breakers, managed to suppress the strike, but the situation was so obviously untenable that the companies raised the wage rates a little, but far from sufficiently, and the authorities appointed a commission to examine the "causes of the disturbances" and to survey the conditions of African workers. True, the commission found that the wages of the overwhelming majority of African workers were far short of the subsistence level, and that in the locations everywhere great poverty and hygienically untenable conditions reigned, but neither the companies nor the authorities did anything to help.

Yet the strike was not without result: it greatly contributed to strengthening the class-consciousness of African workers, preparing them for the struggle against the system of colonial oppression and exploitation. In the 1943 report of A.L. SAFFERY on the conditions of African miners we read the following:

"The psychological effect of the gap between wages and minimum expenditure cannot be over-stressed. Africans working on the mines are becoming increasingly conscious of the great gap between the wages paid to Europeans and those which they themselves receive. I have been impressed by the bitterness with which Africans

<sup>1</sup> More than two million pounds of copper was needed for a single battleship, and two miles of copper wire for a bomber.

<sup>2</sup> L. H. GANN, "The North Rhodesian Copper Industry and the World of Copper 1929-1952", in *Rhodes-Livingstone Journal*, No. 18, 1955.

speak of their wages. They declare openly that although it is they who do the work it is the Europeans who get the money."<sup>1</sup>

But the time was not yet ripe for action. For lack of political parties and trade unions the African workers were helpless at the moment.

For the African masses to awaken to political consciousness, the first impetus was given by the BLEDISLOE report published just before the outbreak of the war, or rather by the proposal it made for a federation of the Rhodesias. The representatives of Africans heard during the inquiry — chiefs, officials of the colonial administration, mostly educated members of the so-called "welfare societies" originally unconcerned with politics — all spoke resolutely against the idea of federation. During the war these welfare societies became more and more politically active.

Further stimulants of the political effervescence of Africans were the activities of the "Urban Advisory Councils" established during the war, in 1941. These bodies had no official authority whatever, but after suppressing the strike the colonial administration thought that these Councils would be of help in calming the latent but growing discontent of Africans by affording them the opportunity of ventilating their complaints in a lawful manner. And the Africans did make use of this opportunity. They voiced their economic and other grievances as well as their political views and stood up against the danger menacing the country — the plan of annexation to Southern Rhodesia. In December 1943, for example, in a meeting of one of the advisory councils, an African schoolmaster said the following:

"... Now that this dreaded question has been discussed at the recent sitting of the Legislative Council it becomes necessary for the African to speak on the subject once more.

"I said dreaded question. The Africans in this country dread the very idea of amalgamating this country with Southern Rhodesia. When the Royal Commission came to enquire about the relationship and possibilities of amalgamating the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland, very strong and reasonable objections were pronounced by the Africans of this country. Many letters too of objections were printed in the *Bantu Mirror*. These strong and reasonable objections have remained unchanged in the minds of Africans.

"I may throw light on the question if I mention some of the strongest and most reasonable objections which were given to the Royal Commissioner by the Africans of this country — and these are:

"(a) The land question in Southern Rhodesia is very acute. There are thousands of landless Africans who are living as squatters in their native land, on lands owned by the white settlers. These landless Africans will, no doubt, if amalgamation were to be enforced, move into Northern Rhodesia and aggravate our land problem here.

"(b) The South African Native Policy of economic and political discrimination and racial segregation is adopted as the official Native Policy of the Southern Rhodesia Government. The Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia has made it clear to everybody that his country is a white man's country and that the black man shall always remain a servant of the white man, if not a slave. On the other hand, the Northern Rhodesia Government had, from the time it took over from the South African Chartered Company, given the African interests a very prominent place. The African Chieftainships have grown and are being given wider powers in the administration of the people. Educated Africans play an important part in the Civil

<sup>1</sup> A. LYNN SAFFERY, *A Report on Some Aspects of African Living Conditions on the Copper-belt of Northern Rhodesia*, Lusaka, 1943, p. 154.



Service, the same, of course, applies to the Mining and Commercial companies. State expenses on Education and Health are not determined on a racial basis as is the case in Southern Rhodesia. Will the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia drop down his Native Policy and follow suit with that of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland?

"If His Majesty's Government would sign an agreement (which must have the approval of the Africans) with the Southern Rhodesia Government that the now existing Native Policy in Northern Rhodesia will not be altered, then the Africans of this country will speak in favour of the question. If no agreement of the kind is made and the Dominions Office decided to hand over Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to Sir Godfrey Huggins, the black peoples in the entire British East Africa will fast lose confidence in the the British Imperial Government.

"I may add that those traders and capitalists who find it difficult to do their business in Northern Rhodesia . . . should be told to pack and go elsewhere and leave us here in peace."<sup>1</sup>

### Nyasaland

In contrast to the Rhodesias, the Nyasaland independence movement took an organized form already during the war. Here, just as in Northern Rhodesia, the idea that political struggle was needed for independence had been first implanted by the migrant workers who, while employed in the Union of South Africa, got acquainted with the African National Congress that had existed there since 1912. First, before the outbreak of World War I, and then during the inter-war years, attempts were allegedly made also in Nyasaland to form a similar organization, but these attempts, if the reports on them were true at all, passed away without leaving a trace until World War II. (South African experience gave rise to the formation, between the two wars, of so-called "welfare societies" or "welfare clubs" in many places of Nyasaland, but they were only of local interest and were not much concerned with politics.)

The Nyasaland African Congress came into being during World War II, more precisely in October 1944. Its birth was largely due to the Nyasaland peasants who, between the two wars and in the early years of World War II had been seasonal workers in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia and had first-hand knowledge of the racist systems reigning in those countries. The unfolding of the independence aspirations of Africans was pushed by the BLEDISLOE report which proposed also the annexation of Nyasaland to Southern Rhodesia. The definitive impulse was then given by the poverty and sufferings of the war times.

The Congress was formed by stages. First, in the early war years, some local "welfare societies" put forward the idea that a political organization embracing the whole country and political struggle were needed. On June 15, 1941, for example, at a meeting held after a football match at the Ndirande Welfare Club an African worker by the name of MLENGA, who had recently come back from South Africa and Southern Rhodesia, spoke about the need for the Nyasalanders to co-operate as one people of one nation to secure the future of their country.<sup>2</sup> On April 25, 1942, participants in a meeting of the Mlanje Native Association spoke up vehemently against the colonialists' plan for annexation to Rhodesia and appealed to the Governor,

<sup>1</sup> T. WALTER WALLBANK, *Contemporary Africa*, New York, 1956, pp. 162-163.

<sup>2</sup> GRAY, *op. cit.*, pp. 341-342.

requesting that the issue be raised in district meetings and their views presented to the Colonial Secretary.

On October 1, 1943, JAMES SANGALA<sup>1</sup> appealed to "all Africans resident in Nyasaland Protectorate" in a circular informing them that the African community of Blantyre and Limbe had discussed the formation of a national association "representative of all Africans resident in Nyasaland", and called upon all peoples of the country to strive for unity and fight for their freedom, for the elimination of the obstacles in the way of their development. When the District Commissioner of the colonial administration asked SANGALA for an explanation of what he meant by the phrase "to fight for their freedom", the African explained to him that they wanted self-government, but that they intended to obtain it not by force, fighting with arms, but by means of political struggle, demanding appropriate political representation in the Legislative Council and in other official and non-official bodies, and further demanded an end to the colour bar.

On January 28, 1944, the Anglican bishop of Nyasaland invited SANGALA to see him for a discussion of the question of how the unofficial European members of the Legislative Council, including the bishop, could represent the interests of Africans. Participating in the meeting were, besides the bishop, two European settler representatives, the Provincial and the District Commissioner, and over seventy Africans. A week before the fixed date, leaders of the new organization in formation (called the Nyasaland African Association for the time being) met to talk over the question and requested MATINGA<sup>2</sup> to explain their position at the forthcoming meeting.

During the talks before the bishop MATINGA said that the Africans did not regard the missionaries as representatives of African interests because they retarded their progress. He blamed them for having never done — or even recommended — anything to alleviate the poverty of Africans or the diseases plaguing them. He reproached them for having many times appealed to the colonial administration complaining that the monthly wage of 8s. fixed for African workers was too high compared with the monthly 4 to 5 shillings they paid to African teachers employed in their schools. He went on listing the grievances and demands of the Africans, claiming back the land which had been taken from Africans and left untilled ("... when we starve it is not because we are lazy but we have no good places to produce enough food and we have to pay higher rents when we want to stay on good land");<sup>3</sup> further he demanded for Africans majority representation in the Legislative Council and in all other bodies affecting their welfare; the right to organize trade unions; the establishment of new industries and collective farms in the villages in order that the peasants should not be compelled to wander from place to place in search of work; higher educational facilities which the colonizers denied them for fear that educated Africans might be able to speak for themselves. MATINGA concluded his statement in these terms: "... anything that makes a race progress has been denied to us and what has been done is to tell us to look for things that are in store in the next world, while others so privileged because of their fair colour are making use of all and everything

<sup>1</sup> In the thirties JAMES SANGALA was an active member of the "Zomba Province Native Association". In 1938 he was one of the organizers of the Zomba meeting of protest against the activity of the BLEDISLOE Commission.

<sup>2</sup> In the thirties CHARLES MATINGA was Secretary of the "Zomba Province Native Association"; in 1938 he was also among the organizers of the protest meeting held at Zomba. In 1941, upon SANGALA's advice, he spent a few months in Rhodesia and in the Union of South Africa to study conditions there.

<sup>3</sup> GRAY, *op. cit.*, p. 338.



in this world . . . If there are things that are good for Europeans, Indians and Half-Castes, we also want them."<sup>1</sup>

After such antecedents the Nyasaland African Congress first introduced itself under this name at a mass meeting in Blantyre on May 20, 1944, where the attendant chiefs of the Blantyre and Chiradzulu districts joined the Congress and enthusiastically supported its programme directed, in the first place, against the proposed annexation to Rhodesia.

The final constitution of the organization took place at its first Annual Conference on October 21, 1944. During that year the Congress formed local branches in numerous districts of the country, whose delegates now attended the Congress, while the districts where there were no branches yet sent representatives of the local "welfare associations" and other "native societies". LEVI MUMBA<sup>2</sup> was elected President of the national organization, and CHARLES MATINGA became Vice-President.

For the time being, until the end of the war, the work of the Congress was limited to the building of its network. The task was not an easy one. The colonial authorities were hostile to the Congress and did everything in their power to prevent it from gaining ground. First of all, they tried to turn the chiefs against the Congress and to deter them from supporting it, and seared them with the lie that the young intellectuals wanted to undermine the traditional standing of the chiefs. This was, however, a futile attempt. The organization grew rapidly, spreading all over the country, and in the new era following the war it could start as a unified broad-based independence movement of the Nyasaland people to enter the battle for the liberation of the country.

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<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 339.

<sup>2</sup> In the thirties LEVI MUMBA was a member of the Advisory Committee on Education established by the colonial administration. In 1938 he was one of the authors of the memorandum which the Blantyre Native Association and the Native Association of North Nyasa, after their members were heard by the BLEDISLOE Commission, submitted in protest against the plan for annexation to Rhodesia.

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## BRITISH EAST AFRICA

The countries of East Africa during World War II gave the British armies more than 300,000 men. The African troops participated first in the defensive battles on the northern frontier of Kenya and then in the fights for the reoccupation of Somaliland and Ethiopia. Afterwards they were again used in armed combats on Madagascar, in the Middle East (Ceylon, India) and Burma, and were detailed to guard duty in prison camps or to garrison service in occupied territories.

Agricultural production in the East African countries and the export of farm products — mainly for the army — increased considerably. At the same time the break of regular contact with Britain necessitated the establishment of food-processing plants, garment-making and repair workshops and other units of light industry.

The prices of food and industrial products during the war rose three- to fourfold, while the wages and salaries of African workers and employees remained unchanged, and the farmers had to sell their produce at lower prices than before the war.

Enlisted African soldiers, whom the British war propaganda had called to arms against fascism and fascist policies with the slogan of freedom and equality, progress and the peoples' right to self-determination, came to see some facts of life. Their war experiences, coupled with the serious material conditions, roused the spirit of revolt in broad masses of the East African peoples, encouraging them to stand up against the system of colonial oppression and exploitation. The African workers were increasingly awakening to class-consciousness, the desperation of African peasants was growing, and also the national aspirations of the nascent and weak African bourgeoisie began to take shape, but the atmosphere of the war years and the ever more stringent war-time measures of the colonial system were not propitious for either the labour movement or the peasant risings or the national independence movement. Minor local strikes and peasant demonstrations occurred also during the war years, but the war-time conditions prevented the emergence of major movements in the countries of East Africa. In Uganda, the only East African country where political complications came one after another during the war, these events were provoked by internal problems of the most important province in the colony, the kingdom of Buganda, and later by the aggravation of the land issue.

The common tasks imposed by the war efforts required systematic co-operation between the colonial authorities of the East African colonies. In 1940 the Governors of four British colonies in East Africa (together with those of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) set up a joint Economic Council. They discussed the establishment of an East African War Council, but this plan was dropped. Co-operation between the four East African colonies became ever broader, resulting in the birth of a number of



common functional organs (East African War Supplies Council, East African Research and Development Board, East African Refugee Administration, etc.). The Governors met in conference from time to time, and the heads of the different administrative departments met once every year; joint educational, health, etc. subcommittees were set up.

During the final stage of the war, Colonial Secretary OLIVER STANLEY worked out a plan to establish a closer collaboration of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika. Early in 1945, immediately before the Labour government took office, he issued a draft constitution under which the Legislative Councils of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika were to include African representatives, too, and the three East African colonies were to receive an Inter-Territorial Assembly composed of 6 European, 6 African and 6 Indian members. With the advent of the new British government this draft of the Tory Colonial Secretary was removed from the agenda.

### Kenya

The European settlers of Kenya did not give up their anti-African attitude during the war either. What is more, in agreement with the colonial administration, they devised new plans to settle in Kenya large numbers of European (mainly British) emigrants after the war, and to subdue the Africans and Indians clamouring for a solution to the land problem. Their paper *East African Standard* in 1942 printed a statement announcing that the Governor and the elected (European) members of the Legislative Council were agreed on this issue. In 1944 an English settler by the name of MONTGOMERY (who held a seat in the Legislative Council as "representative of native interests") in a public speech expressed his hope that the "Natives" would never be entitled to acquire land on the Kenya Highlands. At the same time the leader of the settler members of the legislature, CAVENDISH-BENTINCK, claimed that the "Whites" had "vested interests" in the lands of this part of the country, and that it would really be a "waste of time" for Africans or Indians to insist on this issue.

It was also during the war that the conception of a federation of East African colonies took shape among the Kenya settlers. The idea was to take over the three other colonies and to extend to them the extreme racist policies introduced in Kenya. Underlying this design was the circumstance that, as a result of the war-time co-operation of the four Governors within joint organs, Kenya and its capital, Nairobi, from where the common affairs were handled, had become a sort of economic, financial and military centre of all British East Africa. In the British war cabinet, however, there were at that time also members of the British Labour Party. The Labour Party was against the racial policies of European settlers and the plan for the settlement in Kenya of further Europeans, and it pressed the government for an improvement of the conditions of African workers and for their right to organize. In 1942 under Labourite pressure there formed in Kenya a Trade Disputes Tribunal, but this comprised not a single representative of the interests of African workers, while the employers of Africans were represented by a wealthy settler.

In 1943 the trade unions of African workers were recognized by ordinance. One of the first unions was that of the railway workers, which organized several strikes between 1942 and 1944. The rapid progress of the labour movement compelled the colonial administration to introduce statutory minimum wage rates for the workers, first in Nairobi, then in Mombasa.

Labourite pressure was less successful in political issues: the only change in this line during the war was that in 1944 the Governor nominated an African, ELIUD MATHU, to the Legislative Council consisting of an overwhelming majority of Europeans (and a few Asiatic members).

The Kenya peasantry were in especially bad straits during the war. Most of their produce was swallowed up in the war, and they received nothing or next to nothing for the work they did for the authorities or the settlers. In 1943 the colonial administration voted £117,000 in aid to the European farmers for the development of agricultural production, while it gave not a penny to the African peasants, and even forced large numbers of them to work for 8 to 10 shillings a month on the Europeans' plantations.

The war brought hard times to the Kenya national liberation movement which had a militant past of two decades. During the war just as before, HARRY THUKU<sup>1</sup> and his Kenya Provincial Association came entirely under the influence of the colonial administration. On the other hand, the Kikuyu Central Association remained loyal to its anti-imperialist policy and continued combating against the colonial system. The colonial authorities on May 30, 1940, banned the Association on the pretext that its leaders kept in touch with Italian Somaliland. The leaders of the Association and of the related provincial organizations were arrested and imprisoned, and thousands of Kikuyus were subjected to forced labour on the plantations of European settlers. The Kikuyu freedom movement, however, was not to be stifled. The Kikuyu Central Association went underground and continued its activity in contact with numerous legally existing organizations (Kenya Orthodox Church, Karinga Education Association, etc.) and was building new connections with numerous semi-legal "societies" and trade unions. In 1944 JAMES GICHURU<sup>2</sup> and ELIUD MATHU formed the Kenya African Study Union. The union set itself the task of rallying all Africans in the struggle for land and freedom, regardless of tribal affiliation or religion. In addition to Kikuyus, the new organization was joined by conscious members of other tribal groups (mainly young people and unionized workers), and the membership of the society was rapidly growing.

And while this new organization recruited more and more successfully the cadres for the forthcoming struggle, in London the recognized leader of the Kenya national movement, JOMO KENYATTA, joining forces with KWAME NKRUMAH and other African politicians, unwaveringly continued his struggle for the rights and independence of African peoples.

### Uganda

King DAUDI CHWA of Buganda died on November 22, 1939. The "Lukiko" (Parliament) chose his 15-year-old son, EDWARD MUTESA, to succeed him. Until his coming of age, the royal powers were to be exercised by the three palace ministers,

<sup>1</sup> As for the revolutionary role THUKU had played in the early twenties, see Vol. II, pp. 193-194. Later on, THUKU gave up the revolutionary struggle and pursued a policy of compromise. In 1934 he founded the Kenya Provincial Association, which made propaganda among the Kikuyu tribe for co-operation with the administration. Those who joined the Association had to sign the pledge that they would refrain from any "disturbance" and antigovernment activity.

<sup>2</sup> JAMES SAMUEL GICHURU was born of Christian Kikuyu parents in 1914. His father taught in a mission school. JAMES was educated in the local mission and later graduated from Makerere College in Uganda. He taught in school from 1935 till 1940, and served as headmaster until 1950.



Prime Minister ("Katikoro") NSIBIRWA, Finance Minister ("Omuwanika") KULUBYA, and the Chief Justice ("Omulamuzi").

The colonial administration, just like the British government, was not taken napping by the outbreak of war. Preparations for war had begun in Uganda, as in other British colonies, already before the outbreak of war between Germany and Poland, and were going on steadily and vigorously in 1939 and 1940. As early as February 1939, Governor MITCHELL had appointed a commission to register all Africans, Asians and Europeans willing to volunteer for military service, and to draw up a list of the industrial and commercial enterprises and their managers the government might deem it necessary to ask for various services in the event of war. Shortly afterwards the "Kabaka" (king) called upon his subjects to volunteer for the army. His call was heeded by many of his subjects, even three Ministers among them. The ruler of Bunyoro offered the services of his people for the defence of the British Empire, and he himself reported to military duty. The first regiment of Ugandan volunteers was formed in the early days of May 1939.

The war was already on its way when, on November 29, 1939, Governor MITCHELL, at a meeting of the Legislative Council pointed out that the war would be a long one, and that Uganda's contribution to the war efforts should be made chiefly by developing her own economic resources, by reducing imports and increasing as much as possible the production and export of cotton and coffee as well as foodstuffs, which was to be done by improving the methods of production.

An ordinance issued on May 18, 1940, made military or other public service compulsory for every male between 18 and 45 years. Another ordinance empowered the Governor to organize local military units for the defence of the internal security of Uganda. On June 5, 1940, the British Foreign Secretary sent the Governor a telegram emphasizing, similarly to MITCHELL's statement of November 1939, that the administration must strive to reduce to the lowest minimum its demands for personnel, material and pecuniary means from the mother country and to provide by itself all necessities to the territory and the troops stationed there. A large number of soldiers recruited in Uganda did military service either as the "King's African Rifles" or in battles in Ethiopia or at other fronts.

The war brought serious hardships to the African population of Uganda. The peasantry, which constituted an overwhelming majority of the population, suffered much from the decline in the price of cotton as a result of marketing difficulties, and was alarmed and excited by fresh attempts of the government to lay hands on farm lands.

The war-time conditions put the urban African population in a likewise critical position. The increasing shortage of food and other consumer goods led to a fast rise in prices, which in turn, giving full scope to the (European and Asian) money-grubbers of the black market and to those practising rent usury, contributed towards the impoverishment of the African masses.

During the war years there came to be seen, in the political field, the outlines of two opposing tendencies. One of them was characterized by stubborn attachment to tribalism, the other by the endeavour to make the principle of democracy prevail; it was a conflict between conservatism and progress. At the same time, however, tribal traditions inevitably impelled their adherents to stand up against the colonial administration, that is, it stimulated them to — conscious or unconscious — anti-imperialism; on the other hand, the British tried to make use of this dissension among the Africans to bring the followers of democracy to co-operate with the colonial authorities.

It was this untoward affair — the division of Africans — that caused ultimately that, while new attempts at land seizure and other complications (see right below) were kindling the fire of revolt all the time during the war, the revolt did not break out before the final stage of the war. What made the Africans realize that they had to combine, and what led to the start of mass movements which erupted at the beginning of 1945, was the scheme, renewed at the time by the British imperialists, to create a federation of the East African colonies.

#### *Complications in 1940-1942*

Serious internal complications took place in Uganda during the war years. It all began in 1940, when it became known that the bishop of the ("Native") Anglican Church of Uganda and the British government concluded an agreement, by which the bishop surrendered all land owned by him to the British government. It was in 1900, after the definitive subjugation of Uganda, that the British government had taken the land away from the Uganda peasants to give it to the Anglican Church of Uganda for use by full right.<sup>1</sup> The population, including the lower clergy, angrily protested and charged that the bishop had sold himself to the British government.

In 1941 another cause of resentment and excitement all over the country was the marriage of DAUDI CHWA's widow, the "Queen Mother", to a "commoner". This act was in violation of the Baganda tribal rules. Tribal headmen threw the blame on Prime Minister NSIBIRWA and Finance Minister KULUBYA and demanded their dismissal. The British government replaced NSIBIRWA by SAMWIRI WAMALA but did not dismiss KULUBYA in whom it saw its most loyal supporter.

Coming of age in 1942, the young MUTESA was made Kabaka of Buganda but had to go to Makerere College to pursue his studies for a while. Shortly thereafter a new complication broke out — more precisely, preparations were made to seize further farm lands. Pretending that land was needed for the use of Makerere College and a cotton research centre, the British government demanded that the Lukiko pass an act under which the colonial administration would be empowered to appropriate land for public purposes (by the 1900 agreement it was entitled to such action only with regard to certain lands and within certain limits). Being afraid that their land would be given to European settlers, the Africans raised such a vehement protest that the British government was compelled to modify its claim so that the right of appropriation was vested in the Kabaka, not in the colonial administration. But the Lukiko was not willing to vote the bill in this form either.

#### *Governor Dundas' Policy and "Reform"*

At the beginning of the war, in 1940, the British government appointed to the post of Governor of Uganda CHARLES DUNDAS who, from 1908 on, had served for more than three decades in the colonial administration of several British possessions, including Tanganyika and Rhodesia. Many years' experience had developed in DUNDAS peculiar ideas and schemes about political reforms for Uganda, economic development and the improvement of the material conditions of the African masses.

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. I, p. 344.



Still in 1924 in Tanganyika, at a conference of leading colonial officers in Dar es Salaam, he formulated his idea of the principle of what was called "indirect rule" in the following terms:

"... the development of the system of native administration should be in the direction of creating an autonomous local native Government having its own legislation, treasury and authorities and that gradually the administrative officers should assume more and more the function of Resident Advisers rather than official officials; and ... one of the means whereby the system can be developed is the establishment of local native councils and eventually councils composed of the reorganized native authorities over larger native areas."

This same idea of his was reflected in the measures he took to reorganize the colonial government, namely his reforms introduced in June 1944 for the reorganization of the provincial government of Buganda. The point of the reform was that it limited the powers of the British Resident and British colonial officers to advisory and directing functions, because that was "the correct and *de facto* position of protectorate Administrative Officers under the terms of the Uganda Agreement of 1900", and referred to the African authorities of Buganda (Kabaka, ministers, Lukiko) all the practical business of government and supervision.

Also in the economic field he had great plans and ideas of his own regarding agricultural and industrial development in the colony and the improvement of the living standard of the African population.

He took a number of measures to better the conditions of the African masses. First of all, to help the African cotton growers, in 1941 he attempted to halt the rapid fall of the purchase price of cotton, and, when this proved to be of no avail, in the following years he ordered the colonial government to buy up the entire cotton crop at more or less acceptable prices. To ease the conditions of the urban population he issued in 1942 an ordinance regulating the house rents and making any further rise in the rents in force on January 1, 1942, a punishable offence.

In February 1943 he appointed a Famine Commission to improve the already critical food situation, and conducted an investigation into the deterioration, owing to the war-time conditions, of the material circumstances of the African officials of the administration.

By introducing such and similar measures he succeeded in producing a slight improvement in the situation of Africans, but neither his political reforms nor his economic plans were carried out. The reorganization he had proposed for the administration was conflicting with the policy of the British government and would have amounted to a step backward because, relying on the traditional feudal forces of Buganda, it would have raised obstacles to democratic development. And his plans for economic development could not be implemented under the difficult conditions of the war years.

Governor DUNDAS was relieved of his office at the end of 1944, and the new Governor of Uganda, Sir JOHN HALL, rejected the reforms and all plans of his predecessor.

#### *European Settlers against the Federal Plans*

The European settlers during the war were entirely loyal to the British government and contributed to the war efforts, too. As regards finances, in 1941, when the colonial administration levied surcharges on large incomes, the settlers collected, on top of this taxation, an additional sum of £10,000 as a gift for Prime Minister CHUR-

CHILL's 67th birthday. In 1942 they received with understanding the June ordinance by which the government raised the age limit of compulsory military service from 45 to 55 years, extending conscription (for military and other duties) to women at the same time. They expressed their loyalty to the cause of the Allies also by their support for the settling in Uganda of Polish refugees (who numbered nearly a thousand in September 1941).

There was a point, however, on which the European settlers were in sharp opposition to the British colonial administration: it was the latter's endeavour to create a closer association among the British East African colonies. This effort was opposed not only by the Africans but by the majority of the European settlers as well, for they were all aware that a federation of the East African possessions of Great Britain would mean the extension of the policy of the Kenya ruling class of settlers, the racist practices, to all of East Africa. That is why it caused no small excitement among the settlers that in 1942 the British government, with reference to the threat posed by Japan's entry in the war, established the "Kenya and Uganda Civilian Defence and Supply Council". In vain did Governor DUNDAS try to reassure the settlers that this was a provisional step and did not menace either the territorial integrity or the constitution of Uganda, nevertheless the settlers saw in the setting up of the Council an impairment of the rights of the Uganda legislature.

The controversy became still sharper when the Union of the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of East Africa in 1943 adopted a resolution, urging the creation of a political union of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika, and this unofficial act was followed on December 15 by an official statement of Governor DUNDAS, who declared in the Legislative Council that he considered East Africa an economic entity and would find it appropriate to create closer co-operation among the countries of East Africa. After this, at the beginning of 1944, when the Lord HALEY Commission was in East Africa during its African tour, the Uganda Chamber of Commerce, the Cotton Growing Association, and the Eastern Province Chamber of Commerce presented to the Commission a joint memorandum, in which they expressed their concern that the proposed federation of the East African countries would in fact mean the rule of Kenya over the others, which in turn would have fatal consequences for the African population of Uganda. Nine months later, on November 27, representatives of eleven settler associations, upon the invitation of planter D. N. STAFFORD, met in conference at Kampala to discuss the political future of the territory. STAFFORD suggested that, in the interest of the political consolidation of the countries of East Africa, an East Africa Federal Council composed of a few members be set up to handle in common their foreign affairs, defence, customs, and foreign exchange policies, as well as the post, telegraph and railway systems, thus making these services more efficient without the need of uniting the four territories politically. But the great part of the settlers found this proposition unacceptable.

#### *Complications in January-February 1945*

Sir JOHN HALL, who in December 1944 succeeded DUNDAS as Governor of Uganda, had been Governor of Aden from 1940 to 1944. (Previously he had served in India from 1933 to 1937 and in Zanzibar from 1937 to 1940.) At the time of his taking office the African masses were in a desperate state because of the spreading rumours of the proposed federation of the East African colonies and the grievances accumulat-



ed during the war. It took but a flash to spark off the uprising, and the sparks glowed up in January 1945.

The movement was started by workers. In the first half of January new wage strikes took place at Masaka and Entebbe, and on January 15 the Kampala workers went on strike, also with demands for higher wages. But the strike was soon to erupt into large-scale political demonstrations against the government of the Kabaka and, first of all, against the person of KULUBYA, whom the masses regarded as a willing agent of the British government. The British administration dispatched a police force, a military battalion and a motorized unit against the demonstrators. But the people defended themselves and street battles ensued in which — according to official sources — the protesters here and there committed acts of violence. (No data are available on the number of dead and wounded people.) The “disturbances” lasted a full week, and the British administration at last found it better to relieve KULUBYA. Then the Lukiko passed a decision raising the number of representatives, and announced that preparations were under way to organize legislative elections.

But the fight still did not stop. On February 22 the British administration ordered the police to arrest WAMALA, a well-known opponent of KULUBYA's policy. WAMALA was deported to Hoima, where he died — allegedly of an incurable disease — a year later. To investigate the causes of the “disturbances” the British government appointed a one-man commission in the person of Chief Justice N. H. P. WHITLEY who, in his report published in April, as was to be expected, stated that the police and soldiers had acted rightly and had not fired until it had become inevitable in the interest of maintaining order. At the same time the report blamed the colonial authorities and police for their being unprepared for such occurrences, for having had no appropriate information about the impending disturbances. The report attained its purpose: the colonial administration established a special security agency, which was given the duty to keep constant watch on the public feeling and to supply the authorities with prompt and detailed information about any disruptive activity observed in the country.

The new Governor was a man of no scruples. In July 1945 NSIBIRWA was reinstated as “Katikiro” (Prime Minister). The people profoundly resented this provocative step of the British government, and this resentment came to a head when the Governor — with the help of NSIBIRWA, this lackey ready to do anything for the British masters — managed to impose on the Lukiko the passage of the land appropriation act. On September 5 NSIBIRWA was murdered. The assassin, a nationalist by the name of SENKATUKA, who told that he alone had planned and carried out his act to deliver his country from the traitor, was sent to trial and executed. But the colonial administration was not yet satisfied. Angered by the loss of its faithful servants, KULUBYA and NSIBIRWA, it resorted to unbridled terror. It ordered hundreds of people arrested and deported, and a general “purge” to be made in the offices; those who were open to any suspicion, among them tribal headmen and teachers, were dismissed immediately.

### Tanganyika

After the outbreak of the war the German settlers in Tanganyika, many of whom were nazi agents, were interned and most of them deported. In the beginning the British government thought about replacing them with Jews who had fled from Hitler's Germany but the plan was dropped.

In addition to the already outlined effect of the war on the economic and political life of the East African countries, there occurred in Tanganyika two special changes which had far-reaching consequences for the later, post-war development of the territory.

A fact of importance to the economy was that a Canadian geologist, Dr. WILLIAMSON, in 1940 discovered rich diamond fields in the colony. This, however, was not to make its effect felt upon the development of the country until after the war.

The other momentous change occurred in politics: the relationship between the African masses and their chiefs became worse and worse in many places. This was due, on the one hand, to the colonial administration's practice of having the unpopular war-time measures carried out by the tribal chiefs and, on the other hand, to the fact that numerous chiefs took advantage of the war-time preoccupations of the administration in order to strengthen their own standing. Their despotism confronted the chiefs with the masses of Africans, whose estrangement from the chiefs, coupled with the war experiences of their sons, became one of the main factors contributing to their awakening to consciousness, bolstering their militant spirit and their preparation for the struggle to overthrow the colonial system.

### Zanzibar

Up to World War II Zanzibar was one of the countries with typically one-sided economies. Planters and small farmers alike cultivated exclusively cloves and coconut. The government's attempt to introduce in the island other cultures as well brought only little success: there was some progress in the plantation of coffee, tea, cocoa and cinnamon, but all staple foods were imported from abroad. The war-time conditions made this import extremely difficult, which had as a consequence that the population during the war years paid increasing attention, besides the traditional cultures, to the production of food for domestic consumption.

In the field of politics no noteworthy change took place during the war. Since 1926 the Legislative Council had consisted of 12 colonial officials, 1 European settler, 2 Indians and 3 Arabs, while the Executive Council, presided over by the Sultan, comprised 7 colonial officials. The only “political reform” during the war was that one more official member was added to the Executive Council. No word was said, however, of the inclusion of African representatives in either the Legislative or the Executive Council.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE ANGLO-EGYPTIAN SUDAN

The Eastern Sudan in World War II was of great importance in two ways. As a country bordering on the Italian colonies (Somalia, Eritrea) and the territories under Italian occupation (Ethiopia, British and French Somaliland), it had strategic importance, and as a cotton-producing country it was a main supplier of the British armed forces.

In June 1940, when Britain stepped on it in the war, the Sudan Defence Force numbered all in all five thousand poorly equipped troops. In spite of this, already in the initial stage of the war in Africa (1940-41), the Sudanese took a very active share in repelling the Italian invasion and knocking out the Italians on three fronts: in the operations conducted along the upper reaches of the Nile, at the Blue Nile and on the Red Sea coast. Equally important was the Sudan's material participation in the war-time burdens. Contributions in cash and in kind to the war efforts of the British Empire were made by the sultans and sheiks who had always backed up the government,<sup>1</sup> and also the toiling masses (labourers, farmers, nomadic peasants), despite the worsening living conditions which affected them in the first place (high prices, low wages, food shortages), bravely bore their share of work and made gifts to support the British forces fighting on the fronts. For example, they made 200,000 bedsteads of interwoven hide and rope, over 40,000 metres of rope, a great amount of sundry implements, etc. for the troops fighting in Egypt, Syria and Palestine.<sup>2</sup>

H. C. JACKSON, a former Governor of two Sudanese provinces, explains the war-time loyalty of the African population by asserting that the British colonialists during their forty-year-long rule had won the trust and gratitude of the people. In reality, however, the Sudanese peoples' support for the war can be explained in a different manner. It is accounted for by the fact that the Sudanese had plain knowledge of the events of the Italo-Ethiopian war and the atrocities committed by the Italian fascist invaders in the occupied territories, and after the start of military operations in Africa in June 1940 they had had first-hand knowledge of the atrocities of the Italian invaders who, right at the outset, began shelling Sudanese towns as well as the flocks of sheep and goats and the herds of camels driven together around the springs and water-basins.

After ousting the Italians from the Sudan, the Sudanese troops — whose number was raised to thirty thousand during the war — continued to take part in the opera-

<sup>1</sup> One Bagarra tribe, for example, gave the army 104 of their best horses as remounts, and the Meibod tribe drove a flock of sheep across 400 miles of desert to Omdurman to give them as a gift to the British. See H. C. JACKSON, *The Fighting Sudanese*, London, 1954, pp. 35-36.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 45-46.



tions or kept garrison in several places of North Africa (Tunisia, Libya, Cyrenaica). And Khartoum was throughout the war an essential strategic base: its airfield was a transit station for the British transport planes bound for the Near and the Middle East.

Considerable changes took place in the economy of the Sudan during the war. The production and export of cotton, the main produce of the country, rose twofold, while the imports of food and manufactured goods decreased to a great extent. These changes brought about the expansion of plantation farming and the establishment of numerous new factories for food processing and other light industries.

In addition to all difficulties created everywhere by the war (rising prices, unchanged wages, increased taxation, etc.), the social development of the Sudanese people underwent other considerable changes, too.

The rising Sudanese bourgeoisie stepped up its activity in trying to take hold of the industry and trade of the country, but had little success owing to the competition of powerful foreign capital. On the other hand, plantation farming was steadily gaining ground. At the same time tribal chiefs and feudal elements made vigorous progress on the road of capitalist development.

The war-time conditions were in no small degree responsible for the stratification of the peasantry. While a very thin upper stratum of the peasants embarked on the road of capitalist development and became planters exploiting the labourers and small tenants, the growing taxes and rising prices compelled increasing numbers of poor peasants to leave their lands and start as small tenants or labourers on plantations or industrial workers in the towns. The number of poor peasants who worked as seasonal labourers for a part of year rose to hundreds of thousands.

As a consequence of the starting of new industrial plants and the stream of thousands of poor peasants into the towns, also the industrial proletariat grew rapidly, though it did not yet reach the hundred thousand mark by the end of war.

All these changes had hardly any bearing on the western part of the country inhabited by nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes and on the southern districts populated by Sudanese ("Negro") tribes, where the disintegration of patriarchal feudalism, or detribalization, had only just started.

The toiling peasantry and the labourers lived in serious material conditions; the bourgeoisie was discontent because of the colonial conditions being an obstacle to capitalist development; the war-time experiences had formed the national consciousness of the Africans, first of all the intellectual strata of the national bourgeoisie. All this stimulated the toiling masses to seek improvement, to struggle against colonial oppression, for the elimination of feudal and capitalist exploitation, and the national bourgeoisie felt impelled to fight for free capitalist development, while all strata of the population were seized with the desire of putting an end to the colonial system, of achieving national independence and free development.

All this was clear to the British colonialists as well. Nonetheless, they did nothing during the war either to improve the situation of the masses or to meet the demands of the bourgeoisie. The only so-called "constitutional reform" introduced at that time was nothing but a humbug. In 1943 the Governor-General issued an ordinance establishing the "Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan" and local governments called "Province Councils". The Advisory Council was composed of 28 members, of whom 18 were sent out by the Province Councils. These latter, presided over by the Province Governors, were superior authorities combining the powers of the various local councils established as early as 1938. At the opening session of the Advisory Council for the Northern Sudan on May 15, 1944, the Governor-General proudly

described this step as "the first concrete expression of a Sudanese Nation". In fact, these bodies were also organs of the colonial administration. Although their members included, besides colonial officials, also representatives of the African population — more precisely, representatives of its feudal and tribal rulers — neither the central Advisory Council nor the Province Councils had legislative or executive powers, they had only an advisory capacity.

If the British imperialists thought that by this "reform" they could appease the Sudanese people, or at least the Sudanese national bourgeoisie, and check for a while the unfolding of the independence movement, they were seriously mistaken. The independence struggle of the Sudanese peoples got under way during the war years.

### *Formation of Political Parties in the Sudan*

The war years were marked by the birth of political parties in the Sudan.

To be sure, the first Sudanese political party had been formed before the war. When in 1936 the British and Egyptian governments argued between them, without asking the peoples of the Sudan, about the future of the country, conscious elements of the Sudanese people followed the talks with tense attention and growing concern. It was in response to the 1936 Anglo-Egyptian treaty that towards the end of 1937 the first political movement in the Sudan came into being: the General Graduates' Congress formed by students of the Gordon College of Khartoum and of other schools. It was originally a student association, but it soon opened its door to any educated Sudanese. Its formation was prompted, as it were, by political purposes, but in order to obtain official recognition from the government, the Congress had to conceal its aims and proclaimed that its task was "to serve the public interest and of the graduates". In its first letter signed by its "honorary secretary", ISMAIL EL-AZHARI<sup>1</sup> (the later Prime Minister), and presented to the government on May 22, 1938, though speaking in the name of the entire Sudanese people, the Congress gave no political programme.

Unlike the British government authorities, which refused to recognize the Congress as representative of the Sudanese people and attributed no significance to its formation, the Egyptian government at once realized the political weight of the organization and the good opportunity for Egypt, by getting hold of the Congress, to use it for the promotion of its own purpose. ALI MAHER PASHA, then Prime Minister of Egypt, during his visit to the Sudan in February 1940, took part in a tea party held in his honour by the Congress, where about eight hundred members of the organization were present, and assured the Congress of the sympathies of the Egyptian government for the national movement of the Sudanese people. From that time onwards the leaders of the Congress were inclined to regard the Egyptian government as a supporter of the Sudanese independence movement and often appealed

<sup>1</sup> ISMAIL EL-AZHARI, offspring of a respected Mohammedan family, was born at Omdurman in 1902. He studied at Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum and at the American University of Beirut. After returning home he worked in the educational department of the colonial administration. He played an active part in the formation of the General Graduates' Congress, which elected him Secretary in 1939. In 1942 the Congress, which at the time had about 1,200 members, split: the radical majority favoured union with Egypt and formed the Ashigga Party under AZHARI's direction. In 1947 AZHARI took part in the United Nations debate on the Sudan dispute between Britain and Egypt, where he supported the Egyptian position. In 1952 the Ashigga Party and other groups standing for union with Egypt united under AZHARI's leadership in a new party, which was called the National Unionist Party (N.U.P.).



to Cairo for advice. There is every reason to assume that the further steps of the Congress — its political initiatives made to the British government authorities — were, if not directly encouraged by the Egyptian government, taken certainly in anticipation of its support.

The first overtly political action of the Graduates' Congress was a letter bearing the signature of IBRAHIM AHMAD, presented to the Governor-General on April 3, 1942. This letter summed up the demands of the Sudanese people in twelve points, the most important of which were these:

(a) The British and Egyptian governments should make a joint declaration granting the Sudan, in its geographical boundaries, the right to self-determination after the war;

(b) this right should be safeguarded by legal guarantees;

(c) a representative assembly should be set up to enact laws and approve the budget.

The letter was answered on behalf of the Governor-General by his "Civil Secretary", Sir DOUGLAS NEWBOLD. The reply was a flat refusal. The letter was returned with the explanation that the Governor-General was unwilling to discuss any political questions. Yet there were repeated exchanges of letters between NEWBOLD and the President of the Congress, and even private talks took place between them, in the course of which NEWBOLD again and again assured the Congress of the "good will of the government" towards the independence aspirations of the Sudanese people. Officially, however, the Congress received no concrete promise.

This resulted in a division of the Congress. Part of its members, aware of the annexationist designs of the Egyptian government, took the view that the only way for the Sudan to achieve independence was by having recourse to Britain's help, so they had to accept the half-promise given (through NEWBOLD) by the British government and ask for the assistance of Britain against Egypt. Other members, conscious of the ignominious and hypocritical role Britain had played in the past history of the Sudan, viewed the promises of NEWBOLD as nothing but a deceptive move, and drew the conclusion that the Sudanese people, if they were to rid themselves of the yoke of British imperialism, should join forces with Egypt which also was striving to achieve independence from Britain.

Thus the Congress split, giving birth to two great political parties of the Sudanese people. At the election of the officers of the Congress in November 1944, the proponents of union with Egypt obtained a majority and formed, within the Congress, the Ashigga (Blood Brothers) Party and in the name of the entire Congress adopted a resolution laying down that the aim of the independence movement was to create the basis of a union with Egypt, to form a Sudanese democratic government under the Egyptian Crown. They made their resolution known to the Governor-General, requesting him to bring it to the notice of the British and Egyptian Governments.

Thereupon the outvoted adherents of an independent Sudan in February 1945 formed, likewise within the Congress, the Umma Party.

This division of the Sudanese independence movement revealed not only political but also other, religious and personal, controversies. The Sudanese people are Mohammedan in their majority, but they belong to different sects of the Islam. The Ashigga Party was backed up by the Khatmia (Merghania) sect led by SAYED ALI EL-MERGHANI,<sup>1</sup> while the Umma Party enjoyed the support of the Ashar sect headed by

<sup>1</sup> ALI EL-MERGHANI, leader of the Mohammedan Khatmia sect numbering more than two million members, was born in 1879. He was educated in Egypt and demanded that the Sudan be united to Egypt.

ABDEL RAHMAN EL-MAHDI;<sup>1</sup> accordingly, the two parties entertained different political ideas.

The word "sect" is not a quite proper expression. The *tarikas* of the Islam, which are named sects in literature, differ from one another rather in matters of ritual than in questions of faith, and what separates them and opposes them to one another is the fact of their being rallied behind different religious leaders. The popular belief is that the mass of faithful Mohammedans need a spiritual leader whom Allah has invested with special faculties. The *tarikas* in existence were formed by such Mohammedan "holy prophets", and the present leaders are their descendants. At the beginning of the 20th century one of the largest sects, the Ashar, which attributes its origin to MOHAMMED AHMED (the "Mahdi"), the legendary freedom hero of the Sudanese people, was headed by ABDEL RAHMAN EL-MAHDI, posthumous son of the Mahdi. The second largest sect, the Merghania or Khatmia, had been founded by MOHAMMED OSHMAN EL-KABIR in Hejaz in 1787. Its leader during the war was SAYED ALI EL-MERGHANI.

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<sup>1</sup> SIDDIK EL-MAHDI, son of ABDEL RAHMAN EL-MAHDI, who reorganized the Ashar sect, and grandson of the great "Mahdi" (MOHAMMED AHMED) (cf. Vol. I, pp. 351-355), was born in 1911 and educated at Gordon Memorial College in Khartoum. Like his father, he was against union with Egypt and for an independent Sudan. He was President of the Umma Party from the day of its establishment in 1945.



## THE FRENCH COLONIES

The situation of the French colonies in Black Africa during World War II varied according to the war events. In the early war years no substantial change took place in either the policy of the French government or the conditions of the African masses. Their economic situation changed for the worse owing to the war, and the colonial administration increased its pressure upon the masses, but the Africans still showed loyalty.

After the invasion of France by Nazi Germany the situation altered. French West Africa came under the power of the Vichy government which collaborated with the fascists, and Governor-General Boisson of French West Africa (Federation of West Africa) introduced the fascist regime in the colonies as well. French Equatorial Africa, on the other hand, upon an initiative of FÉLIX ÉBOUÉ,<sup>1</sup> took the side of Free France and supported the French Resistance and the Allied war efforts against Hitler Germany and the Vichy government. In the first two years of the war, under Governor-General Boisson, French West Africa remained under Vichy rule, but in November 1942, after the Allies' landing in North Africa, it also joined Free France.

*Vichy's Colonial Policy*

The colonial policy of Vichy was inspired by the same chauvinistic, imperialist big-power aspirations as that of its predecessors, the previous governments of French imperialism, with the only difference that the traditional policy of assimilation of French imperialism was replaced by a racist policy resulting from the racial mentality taken over from the Nazis. The new draft constitution (unpublished at the time) drawn up by the Vichy regime contained a special chapter on "Administration of the Empire". Neither this chapter nor the draft constitution as a whole made mention of colonies. As the Portuguese government still does today, Vichy regarded the colonies as overseas territories of the "Empire". According to the draft, proposals concerning the overseas territories could be made to the President of the Republic by the "Council of the Empire", their administration being entrusted to high officials

<sup>1</sup> FÉLIX ÉBOUÉ was born in Cayenne Island on December 26, 1885. From 1908 he was in French government service as a colonial official, first in Ubangi-Shari, later in Martinique, the French Sudan, then in Guadeloupe, and finally, in 1939, he became Governor of Chad at Fort-Lamy.



appointed by the President, and a consultative assembly could be set up only where "the social development and security" of the territory permitted.<sup>1</sup>

In the countries of French West Africa Governor-General BOISSON gave effect to this reactionary racist policy. He issued decree after decree on the introduction of racial discrimination in food rationing, in admittance to shops and public places, as well as on the displacement of Africans from European-inhabited urban quarters. The consultative assemblies of the colonies just as the democratic city council of the four communes of Senegal were hindered in their normal work. Arrests and death sentences on the charge of anti-Vichy conspiracy were of common occurrence, and the capital sentences were carried out on the Africans, but never on Europeans.

At the same time the Vichy government conducted a persistent campaign of imperialist colonial propaganda.<sup>2</sup>

### *Eboué's Siding with Free France*

On July 16, 1940, barely a month after Colonel DE GAULLE in his broadcast address from London had called the Frenchmen to fight against the Nazi invaders of France and the Vichy traitors' government, the Governor of Chad colony at the time, FÉLIX ÉBOUÉ, contacted London by cable and, having made the necessary preparations, publicly came out on the side of Free France on August 26, 1940. Chad's example was followed in a few days (August 27 through 30) by the other countries of French Equatorial Africa, either as a spontaneous move by the respective Governor (Ubangi-Shari) or upon the intervention of Colonel DE GAULLE's partisans (Middle Congo, Cameroons). The only exception was Gabon whose Governor stood by the Vichy regime until, in the first half of November, DE GAULLE's troops had occupied that territory.

That was how Free France gained a foothold in French Equatorial Africa, and DE GAULLE chose Brazzaville, the capital of the Middle Congo, as his temporary headquarters. It was there that, on October 27, 1940, he issued, as head of Free France, his Order No. 1 on the formation of an "Empire Defence Council". After the occupation of Gabon ÉBOUÉ was appointed Governor-General of all of French Equatorial Africa.

On September 23, 1940, an Anglo-French armada made an attempt to take Dakar, the capital city of Senegal, but without success. BOISSON received DE GAULLE's forces with heavy gunfire from the battleship *Richelieu*, whereupon the British decided to withdraw.

<sup>1</sup> The text of Chapter VI of the draft is to be found in ANSPRENGER, *Politik im Schwarzen Afrika*, Cologne, 1961, pp. 453-454.

<sup>2</sup> Here are some typical examples of this propaganda literature: (1) Historical works: R. DELHAIZE, *Histoire succincte de l'Afrique française*, Paris, 1941; H. BIDOU, *L'Afrique*, Paris, 1944; Général GOURAUD, *Zinder Tchad: Souvenirs d'un Africain*, Paris, 1944; G. HARDY, *Histoire de la colonisation française*, Paris, 1943. (2) Colonial propaganda: L. POIRIER, *Brazza ou l'épopée du Congo*, Tours, 1940; P. CROIDYS, *Marchand le héros de Fachoda*, Paris, 1942; M. A. LEBLOND, *Anthologie coloniale*, Paris, 1943; J. L. GHEERBRANDT, *Notre empire*, Paris, 1943; J. PAILLARD, *L'Empire français de demain*, Paris, 1943; M. LEBLOND, *L'Empire de la France*, Paris, 1944; PALUEL-MARMONT, *L'épopée du Transsaharien*, Paris, 1944; R. VIARD, *Mille ans de vocation maritime et coloniale française*, Paris, 1945. (3) Old propaganda in new edition: M. M. DU GARD, *Courrier d'Afrique*, Paris, 1942; O. DURAND, *Terre Noire*, Paris, 1943. (4) Scientific works: M. DELAFOSSE, *Les Noirs de l'Afrique*, Paris, 1941; H. MOUEZY, *Assinie et le royaume de Krinjabo*, Paris, 1942; L. TAUXIER, *Histoire des Bambara*, Paris, 1942; D. WESTERMANN, *Autobiographies d'Africains*, Paris, 1953.

French West Africa remained under the administration of the colonial governors loyal to Vichy until Governor-General BOISSON's passing over at the end of 1942. From that time onwards all the French colonies in Black Africa recognized DE GAULLE and his government.

### *Éboué's Policy*

FÉLIX ÉBOUÉ, as Governor-General of French Equatorial Africa, broke completely with the policy of former French governments. In November 1941 he formed a 50-member consultative assembly composed of colonial officials, representatives of the Chambers of Commerce, Catholic bishops and Protestant missionaries, to whom he submitted his programme proclaiming "a new native policy" for French Equatorial Africa. The essence of his new policy was that it broke with the principle of absolute colonial rule and the idea of assimilation. In his view power in the colonies had two elements: French colonial power and the "authority of the native institutions". The authority of the traditional political institutions of Africans was to be restored and further strengthened. "If we want to organize or renew a society, even though not in our own image but in accordance with our ingrained mentality, we shall inevitably meet with failure. The native has his own attitude, laws and country, which are not identical with ours."<sup>1</sup>

Out of this consideration, in contrast with the former practice of the French colonialists, who had removed the traditional chiefs and appointed their own trusted men instead, ÉBOUÉ regarded it as one of his most pressing major duties to seek out and restore to their positions the traditional chiefs and to grant them broad powers in local government.

This was a pretty bold idea but it was hardly realistic. The French colonialists, as is known, endeavoured to replace the traditional chiefs everywhere by their own creatures who were blind tools of the colonial administration. Only in rare and exceptional cases was it possible to dismiss these and reinstate the traditional chiefs of old. Besides, this reform concerned only the provinces, the villages. In the towns, on the other hand, ÉBOUÉ left the system of "direct administration" (rule by colonial officials) intact. True, his idea was that the towns where the African bourgeoisie and intelligentsia (including clerical workers) already possessed appropriate cadres should establish, under the direction of these *évolués* (whose standing was between "citizens" and "subjects"), self-governing "communes" which, still under control by colonial officials, would manage the affairs of the entire African population but should have financial autonomy. Characteristically, however, in all French Equatorial Africa ÉBOUÉ, for the time being, found all in all two cities qualified for the introduction of this self-rule: Libreville in Gabon and the African district of Brazzaville in the Middle Congo.

ÉBOUÉ viewed it as his main task to mobilize the population and the economy of the countries of Black Africa in support of the Allied war efforts, and at the same time to promote the economic and cultural development of Africans, the improvement of the standard of living. He succeeded in the first part of his task. Large numbers of Africans joined the troops of Free France (e.g., Colonel LECLERC's 3,268

<sup>1</sup> Cf. ÉBOUÉ, *Nouvelle politique indigène pour l'AEF*, Algiers, 1945. Characteristically, despite his being a Negro of the West Indies by birth, ÉBOUÉ identified himself with the colonialists.



soldiers victoriously fighting in North Africa comprised only 555 Europeans, the rest were all African volunteers). French Equatorial Africa served as a strategic base and a base of operations for the Allied armies, the port of Pointe-Noire supplied provisions and fuel to the Allied vessels plying between Freetown and South Africa, and the airfields in Chad provided fuel to airplanes taking off in Takoradi for the Middle East. ÉBOUÉ was rather successful in channelling the economic efforts of the colonies towards promoting the conduct of war (see below). In respect of increasing the African economic efforts he opposed the recruitment of African workers for plantations and factories; he saw his aim in the economic advancement of the farmers, and he thought it was the duty of European plantation owners to teach and assist the African farmers. But in places where industrial plants, especially those working for the war, were in need of a considerable labour force, ÉBOUÉ insisted that workers should not be recruited individually, but whole families should be transferred to those plants and new villages should be built for them. He hoped that as the living standard would rise, the weak African merchant class would grow in numbers and wax rich, which would bring with it the shaping of an African bourgeoisie. This direction of development, however, was counteracted by his other idea, namely that he made efforts in towns to prevent detribalization.

Besides economic problems he concerned himself with the cultural advancement of the African population: he provided public assistance to the existing mission schools, established new schools, fostered the different cultural and youth clubs. He set up new courts, in which African judges dispensed justice in both civil and criminal cases according to the local laws, though taking into account European conceptions.

ÉBOUÉ scored successes in developing agriculture and industry in the colonies. He established a labour bureau and a housing agency, a long-range broadcasting station, a secondary school, a military college, etc. But nothing came of his plans for the reorganization of colonial administration: his design to establish municipal self-governing bodies failed to meet with the support of the population. By the end of 1943 altogether 104 "subjects" had enlisted as *évolués*, and by December 1943 only one of the "native courts" had been brought into existence at Pointe-Noire. And as concerns one of his principal aims, the rise of the African standard of living, what he achieved was just the opposite: the already low living standard of the population fell only still lower as a consequence of his measures forcing the stepping up of the growing of cotton and the cultivation of rubber. Notwithstanding this, ÉBOUÉ's administration in the service of Free France and the Allies, by making the African population awake to political and national consciousness, signified a big stride forward in the history of French Equatorial Africa. ÉBOUÉ and his policy played a particularly outstanding role in the preparation and organization of the Brazzaville conference.

#### *The Brazzaville Conference*

The French National Committee headed by General DE GAULLE called the Governors of the French colonies to a conference in Brazzaville in January 1944. The preparation of the conference was directed by the National Commissioner for the Colonies, RENÉ PLEVEN, who also presided over the deliberations.

It was characteristic that not a single African participated in the conference. Among the participants, in addition to the two Governors-General, ÉBOUÉ and

COURNARIE, who had succeeded BOISSON, and the 17 Governors of the several colonial territories, was a delegation from the Provisional National Assembly of Free France, comprising delegates from the Cameroons and the "extra-metropolitan resistance", equally all Europeans. High officials of the colonial administration of Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia attended the conference as observers. African politicians were allowed to voice their opinion only in memorandums (of which there were six among the conference papers).

The conference was opened by DE GAULLE's policy speech. He explained the three basic ideas which then were laid down in the deliberations and resolutions of the conference, namely:

- (1) The colonies should be inseparable from France;
- (2) it should be the duty and endeavour of the metropolitan country to help the Africans to participate in the management of their own affairs;
- (3) the constitutional reforms necessary for this purpose should be decided by the "sovereign French nation" only after the victorious conclusion of the war.

The first idea occasioned no dispute or doubt among the participants. The conference resolution "on the political structure of the colonies" stated in clear terms: "The aim of France's civilizing work in her colonies rules out entirely the idea of self-rule and every possibility of development outside the French Empire: the introduction of autonomy in the colonies, even in a remote future, is out of the question."<sup>1</sup>

A great deal of uncertainty prevailed, however, as to how the constitutional issues should be settled. No end of contradictory and pompous phrases were being tossed about (*république une et indivisible, décentralisation, représentation fédérale empirique, assimilation bien aménagée aboutissant à l'idée de fédération*), but no definite stand was taken on the adoption of the principle of either centralism or federalism.

DE GAULLE's second basic idea, that of the necessity of African political representation, was also endorsed by the conference, which stated in its resolution:

"It is desirable and even indispensable for the colonies to be represented in the future Constituent Assembly. This representation has to be adequate to the importance of the colonies in the French Union... The institution to be established (colonial parliament or rather federal assembly) has to serve the following purposes: strengthen and guarantee the political integrity of the French world and respect the local life and freedom of all territories which, all together, constitute the bloc of France and her colonies or — if despite the possible objections we wish to accept this notion — the French Federation..."

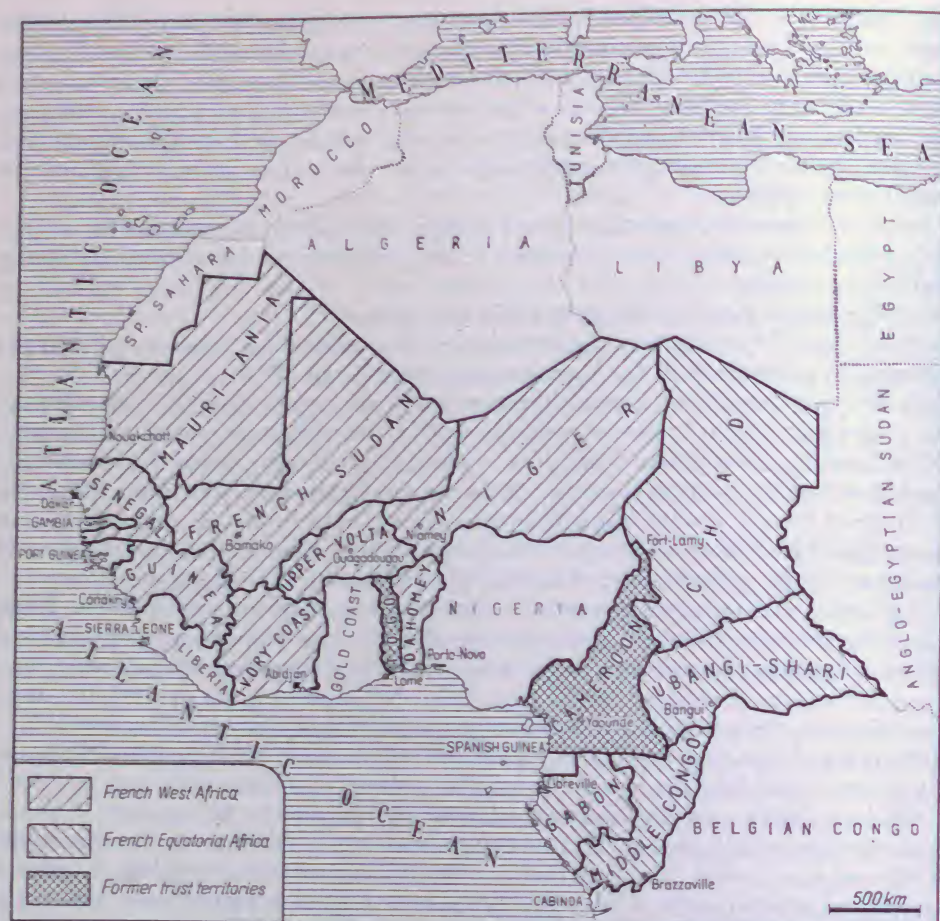
This general declaration of the African right of representation is worth precious little if we take into consideration that its only concrete feature is pointing not forward but backward: the extent of representation of the colonies is determined not by the size of the population but by the importance of the respective colony for the "French Union" (that is, in fact, for imperialist France).

Equally retrograde was the stand adopted by the conference on the issue of the internal representative system in the colonies. The Governors had to enlist in the colonial legislature and administration those "who are already capable of advancing competent opinions" — which, of course, the leading organs of the colonial administration were qualified to decide.

Of an outright reactionary nature were the ideas of the conference concerning the future franchise of Africans. The conference enunciated that popular representation should as far as possible rely on traditional African leaders (the chiefs), but that

<sup>1</sup> *Conférence africaine française, Brazzaville, 30/1-8/2 1944, Algiers, 1944.*





it might be possible also to establish elected popular assemblies, though with the restriction that it proposed the idea of "dual colleges", namely that Africans should vote separately from Europeans and according to other discriminatory rules.

The political statements included in the resolutions were all such general pronouncements. No decision was made on concrete constitutional and policy matters — in compliance with DE GAULLE's third basic idea — except the negative decision to replace the pre-war *Conseil Supérieur des Colonies* by new local (district, provincial, municipal) advisory organs, composed of members nominated by the colonial administration from among the traditional (tribal) African leaders, and to suppress the colonial advisory bodies. Questions of so decisive importance for the Africans as the problem of independence of the African countries, that of the universal human rights of Africans, notably the problem of the abolition of forced labour, did not even come up at the conference.

In the concluding stage of the war as well as after the war, the politicians of French imperialism were bent on discoursing upon the "Brazzaville spirit" as something which meant a big step ahead in the colonial policies of France. In reality, the Brazzaville resolutions were nothing else than "a succession of uneasy compro-

mises",<sup>1</sup> which brought no substantial change in the life of the African colonies. Even after Brazzaville the policy of Free France in the Black African colonies and the situation of the African populations were hardly different from the way things had stood in pre-war times or under the Vichy regime — except for the termination of the racial policies of the Vichy government.

What ÉBOUÉ, in his book *L'Afrique Equatoriale Française et la guerre* (Brazzaville, 1943, p. 11), called *prosperité remarquable* continued to signify to Africans forced labour and increasingly forced production, the further decline of their low standard of living. Not only was forced labour not suppressed during the war, but its application was further increased. For example, the conference proposed the introduction of one-year compulsory labour service. In West Africa, e.g., compulsory portage service was reintroduced to compensate for the shortage of motor lorries.

The situation in French Equatorial Africa was described by H. L. ZIEGLÉ as follows: "The merchants and the treasury were rich, but the country was poor. The living standard of the natives fell. Great efforts were needed to sell products of proper quality at world market prices. The former, uneconomical and antisocial, economic system of French Equatorial Africa, rubber collecting, was revived on a large scale."<sup>2</sup>

Here is what RICHARD MOLARD wrote about the situation in the countries of French West Africa: "The war efforts of the entire Federation are apportioned and imposed on each colony, district, canton, and village according to pre-war statistics, which must be more or less overfulfilled... Fantastic demands are raised... by way of Draconian threats. 'War effort' justifies everything. A specific district is obliged to deliver so and so many tons of latex, but no such thing grows there. The native has thus to walk great distances and buy rubber elsewhere at all costs in order to avoid being punished. He then sells the rubber to the district commander at the official price, which is only a fraction of the market price.

"Another district has to deliver honey, but honey is not produced there. The commander gets punished because he wires to the Governor as follows: 'I agree with honey stop send bees'.<sup>3</sup>

The Brazzaville conference and its resolutions were criticized from the right and from the left. The reactionary colonialists, mainly adherents of the Vichy government, saw in the conference and its resolutions a refusal of the past of French colonialism and attributed it all to the prevailing influence of the Communists.<sup>4</sup> Some French bourgeois liberals criticized the conference as a consultation between colonial governors. They blamed them for leaving out of consideration the Africans' yearning for independence and democratic demands, for promising social and economic reforms whose implementation under the actual capitalist system was an illusion.

No doubt, the Brazzaville conference brought the Africans nothing substantially new. But under the difficult war-time circumstances it was still of great significance, for it foreshadowed the changes that were to come inevitably after the war, and this inspired broad African masses with hope and enthusiasm, demonstrating to their most conscious elements that the colonial imperialists would never voluntarily grant them democratic rights, freedom and independence, that all this must be obtained at the expense of hard struggle, and at the same time it convinced them

<sup>1</sup> THOMAS HODGKIN, *Nationalism in Colonial Africa*, London, 1956, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> H. L. ZIEGLÉ, *L'Afrique Equatoriale Française*, Paris, 1952.

<sup>3</sup> JACQUES RICHARD-MOLARD, *Afrique Occidentale Française*, Paris, 1956.

<sup>4</sup> See, e.g., the memoirs of Vichy's former colonial governor, ARMAND ANNET, *Aux heures troublées de l'Afrique française 1939-1943*, Paris, 1952.



that the war would bring about a world situation in which this struggle might be waged in the hope of victory.

Shortly after the Brazzaville conference, on May 17, 1944, ÉBOUÉ died in Cairo where he had been on business.

#### *The Economic Situation in the French Colonies during the War*

**WEST AFRICA.** The economic life of the countries of French West Africa during the war was steadily declining.

The production of groundnuts, the staple export commodity of the West African French colonies, was decreasing, and only a small part of the diminishing crop was exported, because most of it went for home consumption, either as food or as fuel oil.

The case was similar with another important export item of the Federation, palm kernels and palm oil. The export of palm kernels dropped from the pre-war 81,501 tons (1937) to 42 to 50 thousand tons a year, and the larger part of this quantity was exported to Great Britain, not to France. The already poor palm-oil export fell to an even greater extent, as most of the palm-oil output was used as fuel: before the war (1936) close to 30 thousand tons (29,229 tons to be exact) were exported, and during the war the figure varied between 4 and 10 thousand tons.

During the war there was a considerable decrease in the coffee and cocoa exports, owing to the shortage of vessels, in spite of the fact that the demand increased (cocoa exports in 1939 were 55,196 tons, and in 1944 only 14,674 tons). The cocoa growers hoarded large supplies which later, for lack of outlets for sale, they had to burn, and production was largely stopped. The stockpiling of coffee was prohibited by the colonial administration, which bought up the stock at prices well below the world market price, whereupon the planters stopped cultivating most of their plantations.

From 1942 the colonial authorities of Free France applied compulsion to obtain an increase in the production of crude rubber and of cotton, but to no avail: they failed to achieve an increase of crude rubber production, and the cotton crop even decreased further (from the pre-war 4,000 tons to 3,000 tons).

**EQUATORIAL AFRICA.** The economic life of the countries of French Equatorial Africa during the war, despite the great difficulties similar to those encountered by French West Africa, even made progress in some fields beside the decline of some productive sectors. ÉBOUÉ's colonial administration set itself the task of lending Free France and the Allies not only military but also maximum economic aid. To fulfil this task it had to cope with no small difficulties. Its opposition to the Vichy government severed its traditional ties with the market of metropolitan France, where it had sold the overwhelming part of its produce, and from where most of its imports had come. With the help of the Allies it managed to overcome this obstacle. Great Britain and other countries of the British Commonwealth in 1940-41 purchased the principal products of the four colonies (precious wood, cotton, palm oil and palm kernels, coffee, etc.), and in May 1941 Great Britain concluded an agreement with the administration of French Equatorial Africa, by which she took over the entire output of crude rubber, oil products and diamonds as well as a great part of the coffee and precious wood produced and the livestock of French Equatorial Africa, and undertook to deliver textiles, coal and cement in exchange. The United States also expanded its trade with those territories, 25 per cent of whose imports in 1942 already came from America.

The countries of French Equatorial Africa established lively commercial relations also with the Belgian Congo, which supplied them with sugar, beer and other consumer goods as well as building materials in exchange for hides, precious wood and coffee.

The colonial administration devoted especially great attention to the production of strategic raw materials (natural rubber, cotton, etc.). It reorganized the collecting of natural rubber, forced the growing of cotton, etc. The result was that some crops increased and others declined abruptly.

A few examples from the economies of the several colonial territories:

In the war years the export of precious wood, the principal export commodity of Gabon, almost came to a standstill (it was 675,000 cu. metres in 1927 and only 30,000 cu. metres in 1942), while there was a considerable increase in the export of cocoa and crude rubber.

In the *Middle Congo* the fibre export launched in 1938 entirely ceased, but good progress was made in the field of livestock breeding. Before the war the Middle Congo had imported meat from the Cameroons and Angola. Attempts had been made to establish animal husbandry, but in vain because the animals imported from Chad could not stand the climate of the Congo, so that the livestock still existing in the early years of the war perished in large numbers. In the second half of the war, however, the colonial administration imported breeding animals from the Belgian Congo and Guinea, and cattle breeding started developing rapidly.

The annual production of coffee in *Ubangi-Shari* rose from the pre-war 2,900 tons (despite the 1942/43 decline caused by natural disaster) to 4,759 by 1944.

In *Chad* there was rapid development in rice cultivation which had been introduced immediately before the war.

Characteristic of the war years, especially in the Middle Congo, was the acceleration of urban development, the rapid increase in town population.

Great care was taken of the construction of roads in all four territories. Among those completed during the war were a road connecting the Middle Congo (Doline) with Gabon, one leading from Ubangi-Shari to Chad, and the through road in Chad from Fort-Lamy to Archambault, which was an operational route for General LECLERC's troops.

At the same time permanent bridges were built to replace old timber-work bridges and ferrying.

#### *The African Attitude during the War*

**FRENCH WEST AFRICA.** Under the Vichy regime there was no organized independence or resistance movement in the countries of French West Africa. But the mood of the African population was characterized by demonstrative anti-Vichy moves of some tribal leaders. For example, the Mossi chief in the Upper Volta, MOGHO NABA, incited his followers to oppose the armistice accepted by Vichy, and committed suicide to manifest his protest, but before dying he made his successor promise not to take over the chieftainship "until the true French had returned". The chief of 200,000 Abrous living in Ivory Coast colony, with his sons and bodyguards, took sanctuary in the Gold Coast. Prince KOUAMÉ ADINGRA, son of the king of Bondoukou, with his aged father and ten thousand tribesmen also fled to the Gold Coast, where he and his tribe joined the forces of Free France.

After Governor-General Boisson had capitulated and all French West Africa had sided with Free France, the entire African population unanimously supported



DE GAULLE's policy and the military and economic efforts of the colonial administration in favour of the Allies. According to a leading figure of the independence movement of later times, LÉOPOLD SÉDAR SENGHOR, "in spite of the injustices done to African servicemen... Africans could distinguish between mistakes of the local government and the spirit of the metropolitan country. Black Africa did not stir."<sup>1</sup>

The first organized movement of Africans started in 1944 with the *Syndicat Africain Agricole* founded by FÉLIX HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY<sup>2</sup> in Ivory Coast colony. This trade union of African planters built a whole network of local branches and had a membership of nearly 20,000. Under HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY's direction the union conducted a protest campaign against forced labour and racial discrimination.

**FRENCH EQUATORIAL AFRICA.** In the countries of French Equatorial Africa which, after ÉBOUÉ had joined DE GAULLE, raised the flag of Free France in the middle of 1940, the African population stood firmly by Free France throughout the war and gave active support to the war efforts of DE GAULLE's colonial administration. The only action in French Equatorial Africa during the war was, still before ÉBOUÉ took his decisive step in April 1940, the reactivation of ANDRÉ MATSWA's<sup>3</sup> sectarian movement following the rearrest of MATSWA by the Middle Congo colonial authorities on the charge of propaganda in favour of Germany. The arrest gave rise to tribal unrest because the sect members suspected the chiefs and the African police of loyalty to the colonial administration, and in 1941 a new sectarian movement was launched by "Matswa's lieutenant", SIMON MPADI.

In 1942 MATSWA died — allegedly a natural death — in prison, and the colonial authorities made the blunder of burying him in secret. His followers, who worshipped him as a god, did not believe in his death and ascribed the successes of DE GAULLE and of Free France in the later course of the war, as well as the reforms introduced at the Brazzaville conference, to the divine help rendered to DE GAULLE by "Matswa-Jesus", and the Bakongos pursued their political struggle disguised as a religious affair in MATSWA's spirit.

In 1938, when the territory of the *French Cameroons* was in danger of coming again under the sway of German imperialism, PAUL SOPPO PRISO<sup>4</sup> founded a political organization, the *Jeunesse Camerounaise*. The organization saw the way out of the danger in the mandated territory's being incorporated definitively in the French

<sup>1</sup> LÉOPOLD SÉDAR SENGHOR was born of a well-to-do Serere family at Joal (Senegal) in 1906. His mother was Roman Catholic, and he was brought up in this faith. He went to a Catholic primary school in Senegal and to the Dakar Catholic Lycée, attended the university in Paris and took a master's degree in language and literature. From 1936 he taught at secondary schools, first in Tours and later in Paris, where he also studied African languages at the "École des Hautes Etudes". During World War II he joined the French army. When the Germans took him prisoner, they tried to enlist him as an agent, but he refused and organized the resistance movement among the prisoners. A renowned poet and author of several articles and treatises on the culture and problems of Africa (in French). In 1947 he had an active role in launching the progressive cultural magazine *Présence Africaine*.

<sup>2</sup> FÉLIX HOUPHOUËT-BOIGNY, a member of the Baoulé tribe, son of a wealthy planter, was born in 1905 at Yamoussokro in Ivory Coast colony. He first went to school at Bingerville and took his degree in medicine at William Ponty College in Dakar. He was assistant doctor from 1925 to 1940, when he was appointed district principal of Yamoussokro. From that time onwards he carried on plantation farming.

<sup>3</sup> ANDRÉ MATSWA, of the Bakongo tribe, went to mission school and became a junior clerk in the customs agency of French Equatorial Africa. During World War I, and in the war against the Riffs, he served in the French army. In 1925 he went to Paris, where he worked as accountant and became a French citizen.

<sup>4</sup> Born at Douala on July 19, 1913.

Union. Therefore in 1939 SOPPO PRISO stood up for the enlistment of Cameroonians in the French army, and in 1940 he endorsed taking sides with Free France.

In *French Togoland* before World War II there existed two political organizations: the Togoland German Association and the Francophile Society. The former, founded by Africans who had been educated in German schools and employed by German firms, made propaganda for the return of the German colonialists. It was in 1936 that, to counteract this pro-fascist organization, the Francophile Society was formed with the help of the French colonial authorities. That was the organization in which SYLVANUS OLYMPIO,<sup>1</sup> as vice-president of the society, commenced his political career.

In March 1941 the pro-Vichy colonial authorities established a new political organization, called the *Comité de l'Unité Togolaise*. It was made the task of this committee to work for the rapprochement between the tribes of the north and the south, but the real aim was to counteract the influence of the anti-fascist and other elements sympathizing with Free France.

### Madagascar

Following June 1940 Madagascar was ruled by the Vichy government, which introduced ruthless terror in the island. (Taxes were increased and new taxes levied; further measures extended the application of forced labour, agricultural products were requisitioned or bought up at rock-bottom prices.)

Under the Vichy regime the island served as a naval base for the warships and submarines of the Axis powers, primarily those of Japan, until the British had occupied it in May 1942. About one and a half years after the British occupation of the island, towards the end of 1943, Free France's Minister for the Colonies, RENÉ PLEVEN, made his appearance and definitively took possession of Madagascar on behalf of his government and promised to introduce reforms. Shortly after his visit, on December 27, 1943, the French colonial administration issued a decree appointing the *Conseil d'administration* with a so-called Mixed Committee attached to it. The composition and the powers of the Committee were regulated by a special decree of January 22, 1944, under which the Committee was composed of equal numbers of Malagasy and European members (meaning that fifty thousand Europeans had the same number of representatives on the Committee as six million Malagasy inhabitants!), and its function would have been to discuss all questions concerning the "general interests" of the island with the colonial administration as equal partner. In reality, however, the Committee was hardly more than a formal body. Its only performance was that it conducted an agricultural survey and accordingly formulated some recommendations. Towards the end of the war a decree of March 23, 1945, established an all-Malagasy "Representative Assembly", but its powers were confined to consultative and advisory functions.

<sup>1</sup> SYLVANUS OLYMPIO was born in an influential family of Brazilian origin at Lomé on September 2, 1902. He received primary education in Togoland still under German rule. From 1922 till 1926 he studied economics at London. In 1926 he entered the service of the United Africa Company in Nigeria and was its district manager for Togoland until 1951. He started in politics as vice-president of the Francophile Society which the French authorities had formed to counteract the "Bund der deutschen Togoländer" (Togoland German Association). During World War II he was one of the most active members of the cultural organization "Comité de l'Unité Togolaise" sponsored by the French Commissioner of Togoland.



The new regime brought no change in the situation of the Malagasy masses. It did not alleviate the tax burden, nor did it abolish forced labour and requisitioning. The farmers' production for their own provision declined further, and the prices of consumer goods (mainly imported articles) in the towns rose rapidly. As a result of growing mass poverty, mortality in 1944 was higher than the birth rate.

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## THE BELGIAN CONGO

During World War II the Congo colony gave soldiers to the Allied forces (Congoese units were assigned to the occupation armies in Egypt, the Middle East and Burma). It was also an essential supplier of strategic materials in the first place. The Congo became especially important, not only for staple exports like copper, tin and rubber,<sup>1</sup> but for its uranium, this strategic material essential for the manufacture of the atomic bomb. The A-bombs dropped upon Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the war had been made of uranium mined in the Congo.<sup>2</sup>

The increasing demand for strategic raw materials required higher output of the mines and the extension of plantations, while the declining export of manufactured goods necessitated the establishment of new factories. The growing rate of production brought with it the acceleration of urbanization, a further influx of Africans into the towns, and an increase in the number of industrial workers. In 1938 the African population of the Congo living in urban and mining areas amounted to 8.3 per cent; in 1945 this figure was 14.9 per cent; the number of inhabitants of Léopoldville rose from 40,000 in 1939 to 100,000 by the war's end; wage labourers in the Congo, numbering 536,000 in 1940, totalled about 700,000 at the war's end.

Far more significant than the numerical increase was the change that, in view of the shortage of skilled European labour, the capitalist enterprises, breaking with the established practice, allowed, and even encouraged, African workers — who had until then been employed in ill-paid menial jobs — to obtain qualifications and become skilled workers.

<sup>1</sup> As a rubber-producing country the Congo had lost its importance at the beginning of the 20th century (see Vol. II, p. 89), and between the two wars rubber was a very insignificant item in its total exports. During World War II, however, when the rich Far Eastern sources of crude rubber (Malaya, Indochina) had to be discounted, the Allies tried to meet their needs by increasing raw material production in the Congo.

<sup>2</sup> The true history of the Shinkolobwe uranium mine has remained unknown to this day. In his book *Inside Africa* (pp. 673–678) JOHN GUNTHER discloses, allegedly on the basis of information from EDGAR ÉDOUARD SENGIER, president of the Union Minière, that after the end of World War I the Shinkolobwe mine was put into operation originally to produce radium (that the radium ore contained uranium did not yet matter at that time), but in the early thirties the mine was found unprofitable and closed down. After the outbreak of World War II, however, it was rumoured that the Germans were working on atomic fission to make an atomic bomb of uranium. There being in the Shinkolobwe mine a sizable amount of unprocessed uranium ore, SENGIER in 1940 managed to have more than a thousand tons of that stock shipped "secretly" to the United States, where he put the ore in storage in New York, and in 1941, after the U.S. entry in the war, he placed it at the disposal of the United States government.



While the number of African wage labourers was increasing during the war years, the colonial administration tightened the system of compulsory labour for Africans in road constructions, plantation farming, etc.

The material hardships caused by the war and the growth of colonial oppression and exploitation considerably transformed the mentality of the African masses. Other war-time experiences also pointed in this direction. Additional tens of thousands of peasants turned workers in the towns, mines and plantation estates, and tens of thousands of recruits in the armed forces, for the first time in their lifetime came into contact and exchanged experience with their African brethren coming from different provinces and different tribes. Many of the soldiers even went to foreign lands and contacted Africans of those countries. A regiment from the Belgian Congo, for example, was dispatched to Nigeria, where training took place in common with troops from Nigeria, the Gold Coast and Sierra Leone. Thus they were in a position to compare the treatment of Africans in the Belgian colonies and the Belgian army with the treatment of Africans in other countries and other armed forces. In the Belgian army, for instance, violators of discipline were lawfully subjected to corporal punishment — flogging — which was carried out in public, in the presence of the offender's unit. And if the soldier behaved cowardly and tried to evade the punishment, this was inflicted upon his immediate superior, an African non-commissioned officer. On the other hand, in the British and the French armies whoever hit an African for any reason was tried by court-martial.

The awakening to political consciousness of the Congolese masses was in no small degree due to the democratically phrased antifascist propaganda conducted among the Africans by the Belgian government and its colonial authorities during the war in order to bring the Africans to support the war efforts of the Allied Powers. All these factors were instrumental in spreading general discontent in the African masses and stimulating them to seek some improvement to their conditions, and ultimately led to a series of mass movements in the war years, thus opening a new stage of the history of the Congolese peoples. The difference from the former inter-war stage of the struggle of the Congo peoples was that, while the mass movements of the twenties and thirties were characterized by spontaneity and lack of organization, the mass movements during the war years bore more imprints of consciousness and organization.

Sectarian movements were revived all over the country, peasant risings and mutineering were of common occurrence. In 1940 punitive expeditions were sent on three occasions to the environs of Coquilhatville under the newly introduced emergency ordinance. In 1944 the colonial authorities started regular military operations and occupied whole districts to put down the rebellious peasants in Eastern Province. As to the toll of the atrocities, there is no information available; in the war years thousands of Africans were deported to concentration camps.

In February 1944 at Luluaburg in Kasai Province a large-scale mutiny broke out with the participation of the entire African garrison of the town. Troops called in from other parts of the country were dispatched against the mutineers. The mutiny was quelled, the soldiers were disarmed and imprisoned. A hundred African soldiers were executed by firing squads. The execution took place in public, and thousands of Africans were forced to go out and look on.

The organized labour movement also got started during the war years. Already before the war the African workers (mainly miners) tried to form trade unions, but their effort was thwarted by the colonial administration. During the war, however, the government changed policy: it not only permitted but even suggested and

promoted the formation of African trade unions, starting from the assumption that with the help of the unions under official protection and control it would be able to cripple the workers' movements for higher wages, to prevent any strike, and thus to ensure the unhampered process of war production.

But the colonial government miscalculated. The Union Minière workers went on strike as early as December 1941: with reference to the rising cost of living they demanded a wage raise. Although this claim of the workers was very moderate (all they demanded was an increase of a half franc per day) and the Union Minière management itself well knew that a wage increase was inevitable, the colonial administration, which was averse from recognizing the workers' right to strike, in response to a call of the Katanga Governor sent troops against the strikers. The soldiers fired on the workers, and this atrocity left sixty dead and wounded.

But the workers' struggle and sacrifices were not in vain. Immediately following the defeat of the strike, early in 1942, the Union Minière management raised the daily wages, not by a half franc as demanded by the strikers, but by 1.50 francs. This success of the Elisabethville workers greatly contributed to awakening the class consciousness of the African workers in the Congo.

The workers' efforts at organization, the peasant revolts and the mutinies gave expression to the growing discontent of the African masses and to their simmering desire for freedom. But the war years were not yet the time for the different movements to combine and start the struggle in common for national liberation, to overthrow the system of colonial oppression and exploitation. The war experiences only sowed the seeds of the struggle for independence of the Congolese peoples, and their sprouting was not to come until after the war.

The preparation of the African masses for the independence struggle to be launched after the war was a task left to the Congo by World War II. Another consequence was the country's increasing penetration by the United States of America. The connections between the colony and the Belgian mother country having become looser and more complicated, U.S. monopoly capitalists made the maximum use of this circumstance to increase their economic, political and military influence in the Congo. American capital investment in the most essential sectors of the economy (copper and uranium mining) rose manifold during the war years, and the Congo was flooded with American specialists engaged in the construction of strategic roads, airfields and military bases.

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## THE PORTUGUESE COLONIES

World War II, in which fascist Portugal remained formally neutral, brought a great boom to Portuguese capitalists. Although the fascist government of Portugal sympathized with the German and Italian fascists and, up to 1944, despite its formal neutrality, lent support to their military operations,<sup>1</sup> yet this did not keep the Portuguese capitalists from supplying food and strategic materials to both belligerent parties, securing thereby millions in profit for themselves.

During the war the exports of Angola doubled, and those of Mozambique increased nearly threefold. Portuguese capitalists pocketed millions also from the war shipments conveyed through the ports and railways of Angola and Mozambique. It was also largely due to the growing exploitation of the African colonies that Portugal's gold and currency reserves rose sixfold between 1938 and 1946.

In 1944, when it was obvious to all that Germany lost the war, Portugal took sides with the victor powers: she stopped all supplies to Germany and agreed to the Allies building a naval and air base on the Azores Islands.

Little is known of the war-time life of the peoples of the Portuguese colonies, because all available information, besides the publications of the Portuguese government and colonial authorities, comes from the writings of Portuguese, or pro-Portuguese, authors with imperialist bias, who were all apologists of the colonial system and, in particular, of Portuguese colonial rule. According to the American Professor JAMES DUFFY, labour conditions in the Portuguese colonies since the middle of the thirties, when they had been much criticized by the International Labour Office, had considerably improved, so that such criticisms were voiced neither in the years immediately preceding the war nor in the war years. The Professor thinks this is due to the fact that, as evidenced by recent laws and government pronouncements, "the government was making serious efforts to correct past abuses".<sup>2</sup> To prove the seriousness of these efforts, the Professor mentions that the Portuguese settlers considered them too radical. DUFFY quotes Dr. E. D'ALMEIDA SALDANHA, a Portuguese settler, as accusing SALAZAR that, in getting the "Colonial Act" passed in the thirties, he was "in complete ignorance of the constitutional and physical difference between the white man and the black man and only influenced by the doctrine of

<sup>1</sup> For example, the capital of Mozambique, Lourenço Marques, was a centre of the German intelligence service; the short-wave radio station erected on the outskirts of the city was in the service of the German war machine, mainly for the purpose of naval and reconnaissance operations. See SELWYN JAMES, *South of the Congo*, pp. 233-262; RODERICK PEATTIE, *Struggle on the Veld*, New York, 1947, p. 93.

<sup>2</sup> JAMES DUFFY, *Portuguese Africa*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1959, p. 326.



equality of the idealists of the French Revolution... has concerned himself only with creating a constitutional dogma largely favourable to the Negro".<sup>1</sup> At the same time DUFFY himself, speaking of the "serious efforts" of the Portuguese government, does not fail to refer in a note to the same SALDANHA according to whom these efforts are in vain because, "although our laws are excellent (and they are not always that), the better they are the less we carry them out".<sup>2</sup>

The truth is that neither the policy of the Portuguese government nor the conditions of the people in the Portuguese colonies changed during the war. In spite of the war-time boom and the unprecedented increase in capitalist profits, the starvation wages of African workers did not increase, nor did the burden of the peasants diminish, and the colonial authorities, more than ever before, forced the African masses to work and tried to squeeze the maximum out of the cheap African labour force.

During the war the Portuguese government did nothing to improve the conditions of African workers. In 1943 the Portuguese Minister of Colonies, VIEIRA MACHADO, wrote the following:

"It is necessary to inspire in the black the idea of work and of abandoning his laziness and his depravity if we want to exercise a colonizing action to protect him.

"If vagrancy and crime in whites are punished, we cannot condone it in blacks...

"If we want to civilize the native we must make him adopt as an elementary moral precept the notion that he has no right to live without working.

"A productive society is based on painful hard work, obligatory even for vagrants, and we cannot permit any exception because of race.

"The policy of assimilation which I conceive of must be complete. Therefore it is necessary to establish a rule of conduct for the black which exists for the white, making him acquire a sense of responsibility. It is to be an unenlightened Negrophile not to infuse the African with the absolute necessity of work."<sup>3</sup>

In his book DUFFY comments on this statement by MACHADO as follows:

"Such a statement is altogether consistent with the government's stated view that the Portuguese laborer should find joy through work — no matter whether poorly recompensed. The Portuguese economic system is not much less exploitative at home than it is overseas."<sup>4</sup>

The same purpose of securing cheap African labour was set by a plan which the government had drawn up as early as 1940. The plan, renewing the attempt which had been proposed early in the thirties but which had failed at that time, envisaged the building of "native villages" for married Africans between 25 and 40 years of age, preferably for those who had military service or had worked on large agricultural concerns. The villages would have been organized jointly by the colonial authorities and the Catholic missions, and the independently farming inhabitants of the villages would have been exempted from recruitment for work and even from taxation. Underlying the plan was the endeavour to stop the massive migration of African peasants to the Belgian Congo and the Rhodesias. The plan, however, remained on paper for the time being, and was not carried out until the end of the war.

On the other hand, the Portuguese colonizers in the early years of the war succeeded in enforcing the "training for work" of Africans. Pursuant to the Concordat concluded between Portugal and the Vatican on May 7, 1940, and to the ensuing agreement

<sup>1</sup> DUFFY, *op. cit.*, p. 372.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 318.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 376.

with the missionary societies, in 1941 they put into force the so-called "Missionary Statute" ensuring the missions (first of all the Roman Catholic missionaries of Portuguese nationality) better opportunities and increased government subsidies for the purpose of founding and directing elementary and secondary schools, catechism schools, hospitals, and infirmaries.

In the war years, just as before, the Africans under Portuguese colonial rule had no chance of forming either political parties or trade unions. The colonial authorities tolerated only the organizations they themselves had established and supervised, or which had been created by their African agents upon their initiative and instructions. Such social organizations having insignificant membership and the character of clubs under complete official control were the *Liga Africana* and the *Associação dos Naturais*.

The *Liga Africana* was created by the Portuguese colonizers early in the twenties in order to prevent the formation of really African independence organizations. In spite of the fact that the *Liga* had its headquarters in Lisbon (!), this manoeuvre was not without success.<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of the Portuguese colonies during the war could not call into existence either a mass organization or any newspaper to voice the demand for improvement of the conditions of Africans. The first Portuguese-language mouthpiece of Africans, the paper *O brado africano* (The African Cry) published in Mozambique, which early in the thirties still had been striking militant chords,<sup>2</sup> was muzzled by the colonial

<sup>1</sup> At the Third Pan-African Conference held in Lisbon in 1923 with the *Liga Africana* as host, even such an outstanding champion of the African liberation struggle as W. E. DUBOIS could be deceived as to the real nature of the organization. Still in his book *The World and Africa*, published a quarter of a century later, in 1947, DUBOIS, recalling the Third Pan-African Conference, quotes without any comment a Portuguese deputy who spoke of the *Liga Africana* in these terms: "The great association of Portuguese Negroes, with headquarters at Lisbon, called the *Liga Africana*, is an actual federation of all the indigenous associations scattered throughout the five provinces of Portuguese Africa and represents several million individuals... The *Liga Africana*... has a commission for all the other native organizations and knows how to express to the government in no ambiguous terms, but in a dignified manner, all that should be said to avoid injustice or to bring about the repeal of harsh laws. That is why the *Liga Africana* of Lisbon is the director of the Portuguese African movement, but only in the good sense of the word, without making any appeal to violence and without leaving constitutional limits." (DUFFY, *op. cit.*, p. 374).

<sup>2</sup> In its issue of February 17, 1932, for example, the paper published an editorial entitled "Enough!" which was held in this tone:

"We are fed to the teeth.

"Fed up with supporting you, with suffering the terrible consequences of your follies, your demands, with the squandering misuse of your authority.

"We can no longer stand the pernicious effects of your political and administrative decisions.

"We are no longer willing to make greater and greater useless sacrifices...

"Enough...

"We want you to manifest, not by laws and decrees, but by deeds, your elementary obligations...

"We want to be treated as you treat yourselves.

"We do not want the comfort with which you have surrounded yourselves at the cost of our sweat...

"We do not want your refined education... since we do not want a life dominated by the idea of robbing our fellow men...

"But we do want something...

"We want bread, we want light...

"We don't want to pay for services which are of no use to us... for institutions whose benefits we never feel...

"We want of you a more humane policy...



authorities just before the war; the paper was placed under official control and staffed with people loyal to the administration who, under the cloak of fighting for the rights of Africans, in fact pursued a policy of reconciliation with the colonial system.

The frequent occurrence of such criticism on the part of some more sober elements of the colonial administration during the very years of the war characteristically proves the falseness of Professor DUFFY's above-mentioned positive appraisal of the situation in the Portuguese colonies in the second half of the thirties and during the war (stating that there was only "passing criticism"). That the criticisms are inconsistent and ambiguous, and that the "liberal" claptraps do not prevent the critics from supporting and serving the racial imperialist policies, certain aspects of which they criticize, alter not an iota on the fact that, to put it mildly, Professor DUFFY is mistaken. Here are a few examples from the already quoted book of Professor DUFFY himself.

One of the Portuguese government's chief advisers on African matters, ANTONIO MENDES CORREIA, in his book published in 1940 where he discusses the mixing of Portuguese and African, voices similar views while censuring and condemning the massive transportation of Mozambique Africans to South Africa on the strength of a convention of 1928 between the Portuguese government and the Union of South Africa.<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, he demands equal treatment for Africans and mulattos in Angola, while saying at the same breath: "All Angolans will recognize our firm desire that Angola be forever Portuguese and very Portuguese."<sup>2</sup>

A high inspector in the Portuguese colonial service, NUNES DE OLIVEIRA, in a lecture given at the Colonial High School in 1943, stressed the need for equality of rights of Africans: "The object and not the agent of civilizing action, the Negro must not be regarded by the European as a dreaded or troublesome rival. Moreover, his rivalry is not to be feared but desired. Only when the Negro is able to dispute with the European for those positions which the latter now reserves for himself or shares with the Asian, will we be able to consider him sufficiently evolved . . . and only then will we have the right to proclaim that it was not in vain that we occupied a large part of the African continent. It would be contradictory and absurd to want to civilize the native and flee at the same time from the fatal consequences of this civilization."<sup>3</sup>

Further on in his lecture, however, he made it clear that in his opinion the day when this equality of rights would be realizable "can only vaguely be made out in the very distant future".<sup>4</sup>

"We repeat that we don't want hunger, nor thirst, nor disease, nor discriminatory laws founded on the difference of color . . .

"The gangrene you spread will infect us and later we will not have the strength to act. Now we do . . . It is the instinct for self-preservation . . .

"Enough, gentlemen. Change your ways. There still is time." (Quoted from DUFFY, *op. cit.*, pp. 305-306.)

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> DUFFY, *op. cit.*, p. 374.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 300.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

## CHAPTER X

### ETHIOPIA, ERITREA AND SOMALILAND

Fascist Italy declared war on Britain on June 10, 1940. By that time Italy had assembled an army of 200,000 in Ethiopia. In summer of 1940 the Italian troops, making use of Britain's increasing preoccupation with the French capitulation, displayed great activity in East Africa. They captured some strategically important places on the borders of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan and of Kenya, and early in August launched an attack on British Somaliland situated on the shore of the Gulf of Aden and occupied that territory: the entire northeast corner of the African continent — except the port of Djibouti and the adjacent little French colony (French Somaliland) — was under the sway of Italy. French Somaliland remained in the hands of the Vichy government, but it was surrounded by Italian possessions.

The activity of the Italians, however, had a limited scope. Their East African action could not develop on a large scale, because the fascist invaders had neither men nor materials in sufficient supplies. They could not ship troops and war materials from Italy, because Britain controlled the route (through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal) between Italy and the Italian possessions in East Africa. That is why after the occupation of British Somaliland a certain measure of calm came to the East African theatre.

In September 1940 the Italians started an attack on Egypt from Libya. They intended to penetrate into Egypt from the west, and then to start an offensive from Ethiopia and Eritrea against the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan. But the fascist forces lacked the necessary means to satisfy their ravenous appetite. Their attack on Egypt was soon stopped, and their East African forces could not be deployed in support of their North African campaign, because the uninterrupted activity of Ethiopian guerrillas prevented the Italian troops from being dispatched to other fronts.

In January 1941 the British took the offensive in both North and East Africa. In East Africa they attacked Eritrea, Ethiopia and Italian Somaliland simultaneously. The Italians lost the towns and forts in quick succession. The British applied strong pressure on the Italians from two sides — from the Sudan on the west and from Kenya on the south. But the Italian invaders had to fight not only the British forces. The Ethiopian guerrilla troops, which until then had provoked local skirmishes only from time to time, now started an over-all guerrilla warfare for the liberation of the country. The British troops and the guerrillas were soon joined by the third enemy of the Italians, their own "native" army. The British forces advancing against Italian troops were often confronted with an accomplished fact: the "native troops" had encircled the Italian forces reckoning with a British assault. To capture the Italians, the British first had to free them from the captivity of the "native troops".



By spring of 1941 the British had occupied the whole coast of East Africa. They had taken back from the Italians not only British Somaliland which had been occupied by Italy at the beginning of the war, but also Eritrea and Italian Somaliland. They captured Kismayu on February 14, 1941, and Mogadishu on February 25, 1941; by March 16 they had mopped up the whole territory of British Somaliland and took Asmara on April 1.

French Somaliland (which had until then been governed by the Vichy regime) was entered by the British troops on December 27, 1942, and two days later the territory joined fighting France.

The Ethiopian provinces were liberated one after another from Italian occupation. Some were cleared by British troops, others by Ethiopian guerrillas. The Italians suffered heavy defeats. The British captured thousands of Italian prisoners. At the end of April they took also the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa, and the Negus returned to the capital on May 5, 1941. In the summer of 1941 the Italians held their ground only in a few places in Ethiopia, where geographical features enabled them to protract the operations for a longer time in order to prevent the British from commanding their troops from Ethiopia to the North African theatre.

Despite their defeats the fascist leaders of Italy continued to combat in these places for months. By November 1941, however, all of Ethiopia had been liberated from enemy occupation. The peoples of Ethiopia, with the Negus at their head, could embark on the work of reconstruction to repair the ravages wrought by the five-year occupation and the military operations lasting more than a year.

#### *The Anglo-Ethiopian Agreements of 1942 and 1944*

On February 4, 1941, that is a few months before the British troops liberated Ethiopia, the British government solemnly declared its recognition of Ethiopia's independence and sovereignty and its intention to render her assistance in the rehabilitation of the country.<sup>1</sup>

The British government kept this promise in its own way. On January 31, 1942, it concluded an agreement with Ethiopia. Under the provisions of this agreement Ethiopia, which had until then been treated as "Occupied Enemy Territory", passed again under the rule of the Emperor; however, the British troops, in view of the continuing war, remained in the country and their commander-in-chief received special powers, while many functions of the Ethiopian government organs were for the time being transferred to the British government (for instance, the British appointed their own men as "advisers" to Ethiopian authorities and institutions); and finally Ethiopia agreed that Ogaden Province, which under Italian occupation had been administered as part of Somalia, should remain in British military occupation, and that the railway line and its entire zone be declared for the duration of the war to be a "Reserved Area" also administered by the British.

<sup>1</sup> British Foreign Secretary A. EDEN made the following announcement on behalf of his government: "His Majesty would welcome the reappearance of an independent Ethiopian State and will recognize the claim of the Emperor Haile Selassie to the throne. The Emperor has intimated . . . that he will need assistance and guidance. His Majesty's Government agree with this view . . . They reaffirm that they have themselves no territorial ambitions in Abyssinia."

On October 8, 1942, Ethiopia joined the United Nations and acceded to the Washington Agreement.

On December 19, 1944, Great Britain and Ethiopia signed another agreement. Though the functions transferred to the British government under the 1942 agreement were thereby for the most part restored and even the powers of the British commander were restricted, the British military mission continued to stay in the country and — with reference to the need of the Ethiopian army for training and guidance — was still more reinforced, and its members were granted special privileges. The agreement provided further that British airplanes, both civil and military, should be free to use the airspace and the airfields of Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup> And finally the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway was again turned over to Ethiopia (as will be seen later, under the direction of American specialists), but — and this was what hurt the Ethiopians most — the Ogaden and the "Reserved Area" remained under the authority of the British military administration.

Although at the time of this agreement military operations in Africa had ended, and the war was drawing to a close in Europe as well, it was provided that the agreement should remain in force until the parties had concluded another agreement or one of them had denounced it — after the expiry of two years.

#### *First Steps in the Reconstruction of Ethiopia*

After the termination of British military occupation the Negus energetically set to work on the rehabilitation of the country ravaged by the Italian occupation and the war. In the two years and a half following the signing of the agreement of January 1942 the official gazette of the Imperial government published as many as 70 new acts or decrees, most of them being intended to promote the modernization of the country.

In 1942 the Negus issued a new decree on the emancipation of slaves and the abolition of slavery. After this, in the years 1942–1943, he reorganized the system of public administration, notably putting an end to the so-called *gebbar* system, which gave the functionaries and military commanders the right to exact material services from the peasants, and providing that office-holders and army officers should be paid by the state. Of particular importance was the institution of the judiciary on the model of the advanced Western democratic states, as well as the act guaranteeing equality before the law to nationals and foreigners (abolition of the privileges of aliens).

The Governor of every province had his own local police force, and the central governments organized the regular police on a nationwide basis, under a British Commissioner and four British police officers. (The central police force numbered 2,340 at the war's end.)

In 1944 the Imperial government carried out a tax reform. The most important provision was to levy a land tax to be paid in cash not only on cultivated land but on untilled land. As a result, the feudal owner of vast estates, in order to avoid paying the taxes imposed on his land left unutilized, was compelled either to sell his fallow land to prosperous farmers who employed wage labourers, or to make it tilled by hired labour, or to surrender it to the state entirely.

<sup>1</sup> Under the agreement the right of flight and landing was mutually granted, but at that time Ethiopia still possessed no aeroplanes.



The tax reform and its effects promoted the capitalist development of the backward economy of Ethiopia, but altered nothing on the serious conditions of the peasant masses.

The restoration of economic life made fairly good progress in spite of the hardships caused by the war. The exports of coffee and hides had gone down, but there was a considerable increase in the exportation of grain. Neither before nor during the Italian occupation had Ethiopia registered any notable grain export. After liberation, however, the Ethiopian government, making good use of the boom created by the war, gave its principal attention to the development of this line of production so profitable under the war-time conditions and to the organization of the export of bread-grains. It is characteristic that goods traffic on the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway placed at the service of the external trade of Ethiopia already in the first year following the reopening of the railway line (1943) surpassed the highest volume ever attained there either before or during the Italian occupation.<sup>1</sup>

Besides the organization of public administration and the rehabilitation of the economy, the Imperial government made great efforts to establish new, modern schools in place of the old ones closed down by the Italians or destroyed in the war (as early as the summer of 1943 Haile Selassie College was opened on the outskirts of the capital city), and to build and equip modern hospitals and dispensaries all over the country.

#### *The First Moves of American Penetration*

As we have seen above, the British imperialist colonizers, taking advantage of their victory over the Italian rivals, got a strong foothold in Ethiopia during the war. In the last stage of the war, however, a new rival appeared on the scene to make the initial moves towards economic penetration of Ethiopia — the United States of America. The first reconnoitring steps of U.S. imperialism were taken along two lines:

1. When under the 1944 agreement the Addis Ababa-Djibouti railway again passed into the management of Ethiopia, the necessary technical personnel was made available by the United States.

2. In the closing stage of the war the United States sent to Ethiopia a technical mission, which spent there six months exploring the natural resources needed for the post-war economic development of the country.

#### *The British Occupation of Somalia and Eritrea*

The military operations were still going on when the British government called upon the population of Somaliland and Eritrea to fight against the Italians. It made repeated solemn promises in words and in writing to expel the Italian colonialists from their land for good. Having regard for the territorial claims of the Emperor of Ethiopia (in whose opinion both Somalia and Eritrea were territories severed from the Ethiopian Empire and who demanded their reunion with Ethiopia) and for similar aspirations of a part of the Somali and Eritrean patriots, it held out

<sup>1</sup> The goods traffic put through by the railway was about 50 to 60 thousand tons a year before 1936, it went up to 95 thousand tons under the Italian occupation and attained 98,466 tons in 1943 (the first year after liberation). In the first four months of 1944 it was 40,000 tons.

the prospect for them either to unite with Ethiopia or to become independent, as they would wish, after the victorious conclusion of the war. In the name of the British government hundreds of thousands of leaflets reiterating the promises, addressed to the Somali and Eritrean soldiers fighting in the ranks of the Italian troops, called them to desert from the Italians and join the British troops.<sup>1</sup>

The peoples of Somalia and Eritrea put faith in the given word of the British government. It did not even occur to them that the British might let them down. Large numbers of them joined the victorious British troops, whom the rejoicing population everywhere received as heroes, friends and liberators. They were convinced that they had now been liberated forever from their Italian oppressors, and though it seemed to them natural that for the time being, as long as the fighting would go on in Ethiopian territory, the British troops should continue to stay, but they did not even suspect that the British occupation would be such a long-lasting affair. They took the British promises literally and expected to be rid of the Italians at once. As we shall see below, they entertained different ideas of a future for their countries, but they hoped either to become independent in a short time or to be united to Ethiopia.

However, the British imperialists, as so many times in the course of history, broke their word unscrupulously. They treated Somaliland and Eritrea, and even Ethiopia, as "Occupied Enemy Territory" and had them administered by colonial officers appointed by the British Commander-in-Chief. The Italians had at the time joined up Somaliland with Ethiopia's Somali-inhabited part (Ogaden) and administered them as a single colonial entity. Now the British occupiers did the same, and it was not until after the conclusion of the 1942 agreement with Ethiopia that they returned the Ogaden and other Ethiopian possessions to the Emperor of Ethiopia.

#### *What the British Found in the Occupied Territories*

The condition of ex-Italian Somaliland and Eritrea as the British found it was terrible. The British Ministry of Information in its pamphlet *The First to be Freed* described the gruesome conditions created and left behind in those two countries by the predatory rule of fascist butchers. The war regime of fascist plunderers had brought to complete ruin those already poor and economically backward countries. In Eritrea, for example, which in 1935 had supported 5,000 Europeans in addition to the indigenous population, in 1941 there were 60,000 European civilians to support over and above the Italian armed forces. And as the Italian administration in Eritrea had had no intention to develop either agriculture or the local industries,<sup>2</sup> investments

<sup>1</sup> In March 1941, before the big Keren offensive began, half a million pamphlets were dropped carrying messages like this:

"Eritreans . . . We, the English Government, address you as one warrior does another . . . Desert from the Italians and join us . . . We know . . . you did not wish to be ruled by the Italians . . . You people who wish to live under the flag of His Imperial Majesty, Haile Selassie I, and to have your own flag, we give you our word, you shall be allowed to choose what government you desire . . ." Df. E. SYLVIA PANKHURST, *Ethiopia and Eritrea*, London, 1953, pp. 22-23.

<sup>2</sup> " . . . Eritrea's few potential industries had never been developed, not through inefficiency or idleness, but because the colony was required as an outlet for manufactured goods. Captured correspondence included a letter from the Duke of Aosta to a man who wished to start a tannery, in which the Viceroy said: 'As you are well aware, it is contrary to the policy of the Italian government to encourage industries in Eritrea'." From Lord RENNELL OF RODD, *British Military Administration of Occupied Territories in Africa*, pp. 100-101. (Quoted by PANKHURST, *op. cit.*, p. 27.)



were made only for military purposes, the European immigrants spoiled the local African population even of its poor means of subsistence, and at the same time the colonial administration imported from Italy, primarily for the military but also for the civilians, large quantities of food and manufactured goods, machinery and other equipment. In Somaliland, on the other hand, where Italian concession companies had introduced plantation farming still before the war, constructed irrigation ditches and used farming machines and fertilizers, production during the war came to an almost complete standstill, because most of the Somali farmers and labourers had fled to avoid being forced to work for the hated Italian fascists. A British official inquiry found that the Italian colonial authorities had taken men, women and children by force from all parts of the country. These people were transferred to remote places and condemned to an indefinite period of servitude on Italian farms and plantations, where they drudged under cruel conditions reminiscent of the times of slavery. When the labour conditions of the colony were investigated, the official report stated: "... rations were grossly inadequate both in quality and quantity, and pay varied from one to three lire a day ... Punishment, inflicted by the resident on the ex-parte representations of the employer, was brutal and excessive. For a first offence of disobedience or indiscipline fifty lashes with a hippopotamus-hide whip was a common award, and for a second offence the victim was strung up for several hours on a gallows, with his toes just clear of the ground, suspended by chains attached to wooden billets under his armpits, and with his hands handcuffed behind his back ..."<sup>1</sup>

No wonder that, under such circumstances, thousands of Somali labourers escaped from the labour camps.<sup>2</sup>

To the African population the fascist regime had brought total absence of rights. Africans were deprived of even the most elementary democratic liberties, and the least resistance or disobedience was punished by prison, torture and execution.

The prison conditions in Eritrea were described in the pamphlet *The First to be Freed* as follows: "... The prisons of Eritrea were found to be in a lamentable state. Prisoners were herded in vast, dirty, foul-smelling wards, with tightly closed doors and windows. They slept with no protection but their rags on cement floors, whether in the moist heat of Massawa or in the cold of Asmara. These wards each contained as many as 160 to 200 men. They were infested with vermin which carried typhus and other diseases. Minors were not segregated from adults. Rations were inadequate, poor in quality, badly cooked ... natives had a bowl of vegetable soup and two flat cakes of meal. Many of the prisoners had been committed on political or trumped-up charges: some had been awaiting trial for two or three years because witnesses were away at the war.

"The most damning indictment was that the defects of any one prison, save Nocra, applied to almost all ...

"Nocra ... [was] an exception among Eritrea's prisons, not because it was better, but because it was far, far worse. In this disgraceful penal settlement off the coast near Massawa, 105 people were awaiting trial, with no sanitation and practically no water, in one of the hottest spots on earth.

"This island was inspected on 6th May. The 465 civil prisoners found were reclassified either as criminal or political. It was decided that 133 were criminals in the first

instance and must be sent to Asmara prison, while 332 were entitled to immediate release. But immediate release was out of the question; they were all too ill. Skin diseases were rampant, venereal disease was so common and so advanced that the spectacle was terrible to behold; all were starving. Some could not survive even the voyage to the mainland. Nine died in hospital on arrival and 114 cases had to be admitted for treatment ...

"Nocra had been in existence for five years as a penal settlement, during which time it had held an average of 300 prisoners, mostly young men. In these five years 250 had died — a death-rate of one-sixth of the prison population every year."<sup>1</sup>

An official of the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice, MICHAEL TESSEMA, who under Italian occupation had been in Danane prison in Somalia, made an affidavit on the prison conditions. In this paper, which is among the "Documents on Italian War Crimes, submitted to the United Nations War Crimes Commission by the Imperial Ethiopian Government", we read the following:

"Three prisoners used to live in a little tent provided for one soldier. The prisoners were not given any kind of cloth, blanket or carpet to sleep on ... the food was four hard biscuits in a day. As we used to drink sea water, the daily death rate was between six and thirty persons, who died from dysentery ... Up to the end, the Italian authorities never provided potable water to Danane prisoners.

"From 6,500 persons, who were at Danane, 3,175 died ... [Italian prison officers] used to whip prisoners, saying that the prisoners did not salute them, or that they did not work hard enough. The sort of work which the prisoners used to do was to clean away dirt, ... work in the garden, to collect and fetch firewood and build roads. Those females and males who were tired and refused to work were tied by their hands behind their backs and hanged on the wall for seven days without their feet touching the ground. Because of this cause, the arms of two persons swelled up and were amputated. When prisoners became very sick, Captain Antonio used to say it is better for them to die and killed them by giving them injections of arsenic and strychnine. Also when some of them came for treatment, he used to tie them down and perform operations against their will."<sup>2</sup>

Here is Lord RENNEL's account of the situation: "Prison conditions in Somalia were found to be deplorable in every way. Much evidence of brutality towards the native population was found, not only in the prisons, but by the Italian political and police officers all over the country."<sup>3</sup>

The prison conditions in Mogadishu are described by E. S. PANKHURST as follows:

"Just as in Eritrea, so in Somalia the Administration found the prisons in a condition which no British authorities could tolerate. In the main jail at Mogadishu 400 prisoners were confined in overcrowded cells and wards, of which the walls had been periodically whitewashed until they were inches deep in half-concealed filth. The sanitation was such that the prison could be smelt 200 yards away; a senior official of the Administration who inspected it was promptly and literally sick. The prisoners were supposed to wash, but no washing water was provided. The regulations prescribed a shower-bath every day, but the key could not be found when a British officer asked for it, and the conditions of the lock made it clear that it had not been used for months. The prisoners were supposed to have breakfast, and a midday meal of stew; but no breakfast was served, and the midday meal consisted of a bowl of

<sup>1</sup> E. SYLVIA PANKHURST, *Ex-Italian Somaliland*, London, 1951, p. 139.

<sup>2</sup> After the entry of the British in one of the largest plantations, at Genale, only 500 out of 8,000 labourers reported for work. Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 138.

<sup>1</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1953), pp. 28-29.

<sup>2</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1951), p. 146.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 142.



watery rice. Health conditions were shocking, as was only to be expected, and most of the inmates suffered from running sores.

"... there were stocks in which the ankles of victims had been fastened for days at a time. One prisoner was still under treatment for wounds inflicted on his chest; he had been held down and jumped on with long-nailed climbing boots.

"Many of the 400 men in Mogadishu jail were political prisoners from Ethiopia... It emerged that some seventy of the inmates had not been tried at all, while others had completed their sentences some time ago and were awaiting repatriation. But in more cases than not it proved quite impossible to ascertain the facts at all. No proper records had been kept of the crimes for which prisoners had been sentenced. Up-country commissioners and residents, it seemed, had frequently conducted cases in the most arbitrary manner, merely writing a letter to the director of the jail asking him to imprison natives for various terms. Convicts were not told that there was any right of appeal, and often did not know that it existed. In some cases neither the crime nor the punishment was recorded; where both were known it was clear that sentences had been vicious. Ten years for failing to hand in arms was as light a sentence as most of the Ethiopians had received. Of twenty men committed in 1940 for taking part in a tribal fight in which two men had been killed by unknown hands, the majority had been sentenced for life, and none for less than seven years. It is an illuminating comment on the conduct of the prison that by the spring of 1941 two of these twenty men had died, three were in hospital, and eight had escaped."

"As in Eritrea the faults of one prison were found in most of the others... To this prison [at Villaggio] had been sent one hundred Ethiopian prisoners of whom only forty were still alive when the British arrived: the rest, the Administration learned, had died of 'malaria'."<sup>1</sup>

Evidence of the Italian fascists' brutal atrocities and of the mass executions is provided by the photographs (published in S. PANKHURST's book<sup>2</sup>) which had been taken by the Italians themselves and discovered by the British in 1941.

Regarding the state of sanitation in Eritrea under Italian occupation Lord RENNELL writes that though at Asmara "the Fascist régime had built a large European town... [where] most of the modern houses were piped, there were in some cases no connections to any water mains, and water was delivered by the tank lorries of an enterprise in which many senior Fascist officials were reputed to be financially interested. Owing to a poor rainy season in 1941 the water supply in the winter and early months of 1942 became a great source of anxiety. Of town sanitation there was none. The only sewer was an open drain running through the middle of the town, discharging into the fields and market gardens of a suburb ineptly named 'villaggio del Paradiso'. Not a single public latrine appeared to exist in the 'model' native village."<sup>3</sup>

The aforesaid pamphlet *The First to be Freed* disclosed that in Asmara "the chief means of obtaining drinking water was to purchase it from the carts of a monopolistic company in which Teruzzi, the Italian Minister for Colonies, had a private interest. Such water as the taps provided was undrinkable, and there was not enough of it even for washing... To quote from the medical officer's report, 'Asmara has three public latrines, for Italians only. There are none for natives, either public or private'."<sup>4</sup>

In Somaliland the British occupiers found sanitation in nearly as appalling a state as in Eritrea. In Mogadishu, "Water-borne sanitation had broken down, and the

accumulation of many months' refuse lay piled between the houses. One hundred tons of dust-bin rubbish were removed by the British hygiene staff from the dock area alone; even the well-equipped Italian hospital had disposed of its garbage and the soiled dressings of 400 patients by throwing them over its boundary wall. Flies swarmed through the streets and buildings of the town.

"Even worse conditions had been encountered in Kismayu. Practically every town in Somalia was found in the condition of either Mogadishu or Kismayu."<sup>1</sup>

### *The Regime of British Occupation*

When the British troops entered Somalia and Eritrea, the population heaved a sigh of relief. They thought their suffering would end with the passing of fascist domination, they would be liberated, and the British would keep their promise to restore their free country.

They were bitterly disappointed in their expectations. The military administration introduced by the British was none too different from the Italian rule of terror.

The Africans, who saw their biggest enemy in the fascists, could have understood as natural that the British government should use the colonies to the utmost for securing human and material resources for its war against the fascists. But they were disappointed and appalled to see that the British making war in defence of democracy introduced in the liberated countries a ruthless terror regime not unlike fascist rule.

But the most appalling of all for the peoples of Somalia and Eritrea was that against their expectations, the British "liberators", belying their former propaganda and pledges, failed to remove the Italian colonial officials and to evict the Italian planters, accorded them privileged treatment and conditions, allowed them to continue molesting and exploiting the Africans, shut their eyes to Italian sabotage, and were lenient towards Italians engaged in outright hostile activities against the Allies, and even provided them with arms to protect themselves and their property from the Africans.

The head of the British regime of occupation, Sir PHILIP MITCHELL ("Chief Political Officer for the Occupied Enemy Territories"), issued a memorandum on guiding principles for the administration of Eritrea and Somaliland, in which it was pointed out that, "Italian law and regulations, territorial and municipal, should be maintained as far as possible, and if Italian Judges and Magistrates are willing to remain in office, they may be permitted to function with such safeguards as may appear desirable."<sup>2</sup>

Relying on their instructions, high officials of the British military administration considered it their duty to provide for the Italian inhabitants, including the prisoners and their families, to protect their persons and property from the "natives" and to uphold their prestige among the indigenous population. We read in an official document of June 28, 1941, entitled "Note on the political situation in Eritrea":

"The Italian community is primarily of security interest; we must protect ourselves against their subversive endeavours, and protect the Italians from the vengeance of the natives... We hold a large number of Italian prisoners and hold the threat of imprisonment over the whole male population; their families are dependent on our charity; all are dependent on our protection... The degree of quiescence will

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 135-136.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 144, 262, 421.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted by PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1953), p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>1</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1951), p. 140.

<sup>2</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1953), p. 31.



depend to a large extent on the way the British themselves behave. In general it can be said that they nearly all feel an instinct to treat the Italians fairly and decently."<sup>1</sup>

Accordingly, only few of the prisoners of war were interned, the overwhelming majority were released, and these were even permitted to keep their arms and flaunt their fascist badges. An American army officer, EDWARD ELLSBERG, wrote this about Italian officers strutting along the streets of Asmara: "I was unarmed, so was every other of the few British and American officers, forming a drab blotch on that otherwise brilliant military spectacle. But every one of these prisoners of war was armed — clinging to his waist was an automatic pistol protruding from its holster! There were enough armed Italian officers in sight easily to take over the country in view of the few soldiers the British had left in Eritrea and the slight handful only that I knew we had. What kind of topsy-turvy war was this where conquerors went about defenceless while their prisoners roamed the street at large, armed?"<sup>2</sup>

Italians were still serving as Attorney General, Public Prosecutor, judges, district commissioners, tax collectors and even mayors. The police chief was a Briton, but the police officers were Italians, while Eritreans were allowed to serve only as constables. Characteristically, British military headquarters employed Italian orderlies to send secret documents (confidential orders, instructions, office memos, etc.).

In such circumstances it is small wonder that prisoners of war escaped in large numbers. Between April and July 1941, 54 prisoners escaped from P.O.W. camps, 687 from hospitals, and 75 from "employment on parole", followed by another 106 by the end of July and a further 90 in August. The number of fugitives at the time was put at about 1,000. Later 800 prisoners of war escaped to Yemen by sailboat. British intelligence discovered that the Italian prisoners had been assisted in escaping by an Italian bishop as well as French and Swiss missionaries.

Led by their officers, Italian P.O.W.s at liberty committed a series of sabotage acts, made preparations for guerrilla warfare against the British; they hatched a plot to assassinate the Crown Prince and the Emperor of Ethiopia, were keeping in touch with Ethiopian armed irregulars, made axis propaganda, etc. They sabotaged aircraft at the airports of Massawa, Asmara and Gura. A fire they started in the harbour of Massawa caused £1,000,000 damage to the British government, destroying almost the whole of the "native quarter". In Asmara they damaged the radio transmitters of the signal depot and put the rope railway out of working order. They pilfered the food and fuel storehouses and knocked holes in several 40-gallon oil drums. They watched honest Italian workers, distributed leaflets among them, calling for strike, or else threatening reprisals against them. In Massawa they threatened to kill an Italian pilot who served on British merchant ships bringing food for the population.

In November 1941 the British administration arrested an Italian officer, Lt.-Col. LUIGI PELUSELLI, the leader of a subversive gang whose programme consisted of five points:

- "1. Collection of personal dossiers on all Italians in the colony.
- "2. Compilation and distribution of pamphlets.
- "3. Collection of arms.
- "4. Organization of armed bands in the interior in order to disrupt communications with Ethiopia.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 42.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 40.

"5. Compilation of plans of Allied workshops, etc., for despatch to Italy."<sup>1</sup>

British intelligence was aware of Italian sabotage and subversion. Eritreans and Ethiopians also kept the administration informed of such subversive schemes. Hidden stocks of arms and explosives, secret radios and anti-British propaganda material were seized on several occasions. In November 1941 a British administration memorandum stated that there were still 35,000 Italians with military training in Asmara and that arms and ammunition were hidden in many places. All this, however, did not move the British administration to abandon its lenient policy towards the Italians. When the *Military Review* of the British East Africa Command pointed out that Italian subversion posed a threat to the security of Eritrea, the British Chief Administrator, Brigadier B. KENNEDY-COOKE, vehemently protested, saying that "subversive activities, if they exist at all, are of such a minor nature as not to be worth mentioning."<sup>2</sup>

A memorandum of August 1941 reported that "a spirit of co-operation was developing" among the Italians, and that the Eritreans, not the Italians, were the chief danger: "Now that we have removed the dangerous elements in the P.A.I. (Polizia Africana Italiana) and the carabinieri the Italian police are co-operating to the best of their ability. We are assured that for all practical purposes the Italian community is virtually disarmed. But the Eritreans still possess dangerous quantities of rifles and grenades."<sup>3</sup>

Accordingly, Italians received numerous privileges at the expense of the Eritreans. The latter in many places were driven from the farms and pastures,<sup>4</sup> while the Italians were given lands, water and forest rights, etc.

The maintenance of Italian laws was tantamount to the promotion of severe racial discrimination. Cafés, restaurants, hotels and cinemas everywhere displayed the sign: "Prohibited for Natives". Eritreans were not allowed to ride in taxi, they were not granted export and import licences, and even from their own land they could collect only dead wood, but Italians received permission to cut green wood in the forest.

### *The Situation of the Somalis*

One of the most inhumane features of the Italian colonial regime in Somaliland was the system of "collective punishment", under which a whole tribe should be punished for any theft or act of violence committed by one of the tribesmen: the punishment was seizure of the tribe's livestock or destruction of its dwellings. This monstrous practice was continued by the British military regime. In the aforecited official publication Lord RENNELL relates a case in which "1,700 camels were duly collected, the individual offenders punished and a large collective fine imposed."<sup>5</sup>

The British authorities had no scruples in applying the massive seizure of cattle not only as a measure of collective punishment but otherwise as well.

SYLVIA PANKHURST mentions the complaints of the headsmen of the Mijjertein tribe who said that "at the time of the British occupation, 200,000 camels and

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 43.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. G. K. N. TREVASKIS [Chief Secretary for Eritrea at the time], *Eritrea: A Colony in Transition 1941-52*, New York, 1960.

<sup>5</sup> RENNELL, *op. cit.*, p. 180.



500,000 goats and sheep were looted by British troops, commanded by Colonel R. H. Smith".<sup>1</sup>

For the animals requisitioned for their troops the British officers used to give a receipt to be presented to headquarters for payment. But by the time the owners of the cattle arrived at the place the army had left. Miss PANKHURST published the photo<sup>2</sup> of such a receipt made out for 15 camels and 33 sheep. She sent the receipt to the War Office requesting them to investigate the case and to make the payment. But the request was denied on the pretext that the signature could not be identified.

Another antidemocratic institution which the British military administration had taken over unchanged from the Italian fascists was the regime of forced labour.

A special feature of the military rule of terror introduced by the British occupying power was the unarming of the Somali population. This in itself was a serious blow to the Somalis, many of whom carried old rifles to protect themselves and their herds from the wild beasts, or for hunting. The most painful and most inhumane procedure was, however, the way the arms were gathered in. In such cases troops equipped with machine guns surrounded the wells and permitted neither the Somali herdsman nor their animals to drink until the weapons had been handed in. In a petition to the Emperor of Ethiopia the Somalis complained that for lack of arms they had been compelled to send men to their clansmen in British Somaliland to buy arms from them in order to be permitted to draw water. But this was to no avail, because the British officers insisted that there must still be some arms hidden away, and so they allowed only some of the cattle to drink and killed off the rest. The Somalis bitterly complained that many women, children and aged people had died and animals had perished for lack of water, as a result of this "convenient" method of gathering in arms.

The horrors of British military occupation are illuminated by the following documents.

Excerpts from a speech by BALAMBARAS ABDULAH FARAH, Deputy of Ogaden, in the Ethiopian Chamber of Deputies on December 20, 1944:

"... the British Military Authorities have committed crimes in Ogaden which have never even been done by Fascists.

"Proof of this:

"The Fascists used to kill a man, but until they killed him they never deprived him of water. But the British Authorities surrounded the wells and the cattle for about seven days, depriving them of water, and people suffered death owing to thirst.

"After seven days they permitted some of the cattle to drink water and machine-gunned the rest.

"When these events took place the British Somalis were permitted to draw water and their cattle were given natural treatment.

"The British proclaimed punishment against those who supplied water to any Ogaden people, and those who intermingled through marriage or in case of relationship..."<sup>3</sup>

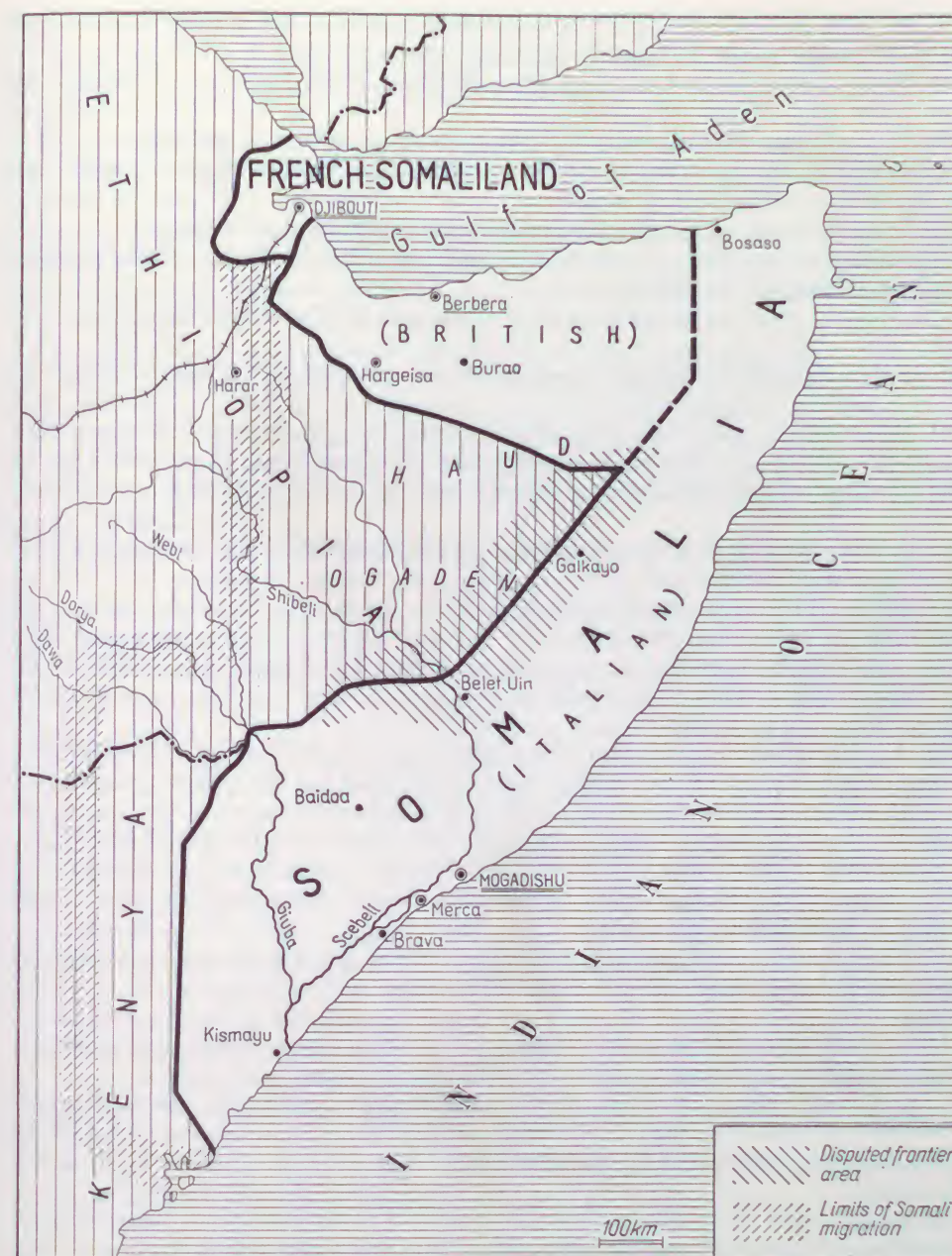
Excerpts from a petition to the Negus by 25 chiefs and other leading representatives of 15 Somali tribes:

"The British Government [and its people] have cruelly treated us, your people, in a manner not done by any considerate Government.

<sup>1</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1951), p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 195.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 170.



"1. Our daughters and wives are forcibly taken by them and raped.

"2. Our cattle are machine-gunned.

"3. Without any crime having been committed they came to our village at Fik, and burned our houses.

"4. On the pretext of gathering in rifles they have killed many of our brothers who were found with rifles. By this system many of our brothers have been killed.



"5. Without even an allegation of crime they imposed fines on any man of from 300 to 400 camels, and did not tell him the reason.

"6. They have separated mothers from children, wives from husbands and they cannot see each other.

"7. They also come to our camp and kill many of our innocent brothers.

"8. They come in the night and rob the clothes and ornaments of our wives, with the result that our wives go naked.

"9. They take our cattle from the pasture land without any reason.

"10. When a man commits an offence, instead of punishing the offender legally they burn four or five villages.

"11. They cause us to quarrel among ourselves so that we kill one another.

"We give in detail the ill-treatment which was inflicted on one clan. Not a single has escaped the ill-treatment.

"1. In the village called Daudid, eleven months ago, at 5 o'clock in the evening, one South African [i.e. Kenyan.—E. S.] called Lt. Degader, as he is called by the local Somalis, robbed 500 camels and burnt our village. The reason is not known to us.

"2. Nine months ago, at 5 o'clock, Captain Magg headed 25 soldiers and came and looted 200 camels from us.

"3. Fifteen men from our clan and fifteen from another had a clash, and our clan took from the other clan 200 camels, the British obliged us to give them back. After these had been returned they imposed on us a fine and we paid 551 camels. In this case the fifteen men should have been punished, and not all the clan, which is against human law.

"4. A year ago, on a mountain called Chico, our camels were grazing and just at 12 o'clock of the day they bombed our camels and killed 100 of them and wounded 70.

"5. In the month of December, the British soldiers pretended to buy cows, and killed two cows, following this they fired on the village. And they gave false reason that it was the natives who fired, because of this they made them pay 100 cattle as a fine. They said that in case they did not pay these cattle within ten days the fine would be increased to 200 cattle...

"6. 25 days ago, in villages called Nejaha and Addeyo, four English soldiers came and wounded a 12-year-old girl, killed 17 sheep, took 11 camels and burnt 30 houses..."<sup>1</sup>

Excerpts from a petition to the Emperor of Ethiopia by 15 chiefs of Somali tribes (Shekash, Habar Awal, Gedeburssi, Ogaden) dated January 17, 1945:

"... We are forbidden from visiting our brothers, who are dwelling nearby.

"Enmity is created in such a successful manner that it became possible for brother to kill brother, and because of such bloodshed we were forced to consider one another as enemies.

"Owing to lack of justice we were beaten and flogged to death. Our wives are always being taken by force by the British soldiers and raped. Our cattle are machine-gunned and killed with thirst. The ill-treatment which we cannot show in writing is continually inflicted on us..."<sup>2</sup>

Excerpts from a letter of ABDUL UHAB YUSUF, Rer Abduli Chief Shiek, to the Emperor of Ethiopia:

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 171.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 173.

"Our will is to be under the Ethiopian Government in loyalty. Great harm has befallen us under the British administration. Life has not remained for us. We have been looted of our cattle and property. Some of our men have been killed, others arrested..."

"In the letter which you have forwarded to us we are informed of your coming and we are awaiting it with pleasure. If we come to you the English will arrest our wives and children..."

"I am sending this letter by the hand of my brother. I could not come personally for fear of the English. My brother will explain to you the condition of my country."<sup>1</sup>

An open letter in 1946 from ABDUL KADER SAKHAWADEEN on behalf of the Somalis to British Prime Minister C. R. ATTLEE:

"Your Excellency, I have taken the liberty to draw your attention to the afflictions with which the Somali people are burdened under your Government, which is represented by the British Military Administration.

"We have heard and believed that Great Britain had sacrificed the blood and lives of her sons and daughters, and devoted all her resources of wealth and manpower, in the fight against the Axis Powers in order to make the world safe for Freedom and Democracy.

"The Somalis were not the enemy of the Allies. It was their misfortune that your enemy — the Italians — forcibly occupied and subjected our country fifty years ago. We are, therefore, among the enslaved and oppressed to whom Freedom and Democracy was promised.

"To the people of Somaliland the five years since the day of our 'liberation' have been conspicuous in their lack of humane considerations and the brutal suppression of democratic rights. To-day the British Military Administration is almost as feared and disliked as the tyrannical Fascist Rule.

"Racial discrimination exists in Somaliland, notably at Mogadishu.

"Collective Punishment Laws have been enacted and are enforced. They are the means of spreading terror and want among the people. For instance, some Askaris recently deserted. The livestock of their innocent tribesmen was seized. The criminals had not taken refuge with the tribesmen. The incident had taken place very many miles away from the tribal area. No livestock of the deserters was in the hands of the tribesmen. The milk of livestock is the staple food of the people. Seizure of livestock is all the more detestable in that it deprives the women and children of their means of sustenance, through no fault of their own.

"Collective punishment is also the root cause of the majority of killings in Somaliland, for when the ignorant tribesmen get excited at such a tyrannical act and protest against it by stone-throwing or the futile brandishing of sticks, they are shot down for rioting.

"Conscription for slave-labour exists. The poor wretches thus collected are parcelled out by the British Military Administration among the agricultural concessions at Genale, along the Juba River and the area held by the S.A.I.S. (Società Agricola Italo-Somala). The slave-labourers are compelled to work in these areas under conditions which are a living mockery of Democracy and the ideals of human rights. The workers are brutally flogged in public for routine offences.

"Some officers of the Administration flagrantly violate one of the foremost of human rights — the sanctity of the person. Elders and respected Somalis are bullied and struck in offices by them or on their orders at any show of spirit.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 174.



"The laws and policy under which our country is administered were forged mainly by the Italians and Fascist statesmen for their own vile ends. The application of this tyrannical law by a Democratic Power is not only a great wrong but is causing the gravest miscarriage of justice.

"We recall to you the ideals and principles for which the heroes of England and the Allied countries gave their lives, and beg of you to send a disinterested and competent Commission or Mission to examine our complaints and make recommendations for the speedy relief of the causes of misrule.

"I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant.

"ABDUL KADER SAKHAWADEEN (a Somali)."<sup>1</sup>

#### *Situation and the Actions of the People of Eritrea*

The Eritrean people welcomed the advent of the British, for they expected them to expel the Italians definitively. Their majority longed for union with Ethiopia, others anticipated that Eritrea would win independence and decide by itself whether to join Ethiopia or Somalia, or whether to constitute an independent state. When the British military authorities replaced the Italian rule of terror by almost as ruthless a regime of terror, which even retained most of the Italian officers, civil servants and judges, the Eritreans realized that the British had failed in their pledges and betrayed them.

How much the British military authorities had the interests of the Italian fascists at heart, to the detriment of the Eritreans, is vividly shown by the following few cases.

Representatives of the Eritrean population, more than 3,000 people, proceeded to the building of the British Military Administration, bearing the Union Jack and the Ethiopian flag, to appeal for protection against Italian violence. The British officers politely listened to the spokesmen and promised to consider the case carefully. The only step taken by the British was to issue a proclamation prohibiting the assembly of more than three persons and the use of the Union Jack and the Ethiopian flag.

At Addi-Gadda, in Serale Province, where an Italian, Count MARAZZANI, some 30 years before, had enclosed for himself the common grazing land of the villagers and had let it to an Italian farmer, the people of the village, in the belief that now they would get their land back, called upon the farmer and politely requested him to permit their cattle to graze on the pasture. The farmer rudely refused their request, and the people nevertheless led in their cattle. Thereupon the farmer appealed to the British military command for help. The British authorities, having instructions to maintain Italian law and protect Italian property, dispatched an armoured column with machine guns to attack the village people, five of whom were killed and many wounded.

The internal order of the colony under the Italians had been maintained by Italian carabinieri, the Polizia Coloniale composed equally of Italians, and an Eritrean force, "Zapti", under Italian officers. The Italians had not paid the Zapti for several months. In May 1941 the Zapti sent a deputation of twenty to the British military headquarters and asked for their arrears of pay. They were received by a captain of the carabinieri, who got into a violent rage at their audacity and ordered a private to

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 162-163.

fire on them. One of the Zapti died on the spot, the rest fled, but another of them was shot dead by a chasing carabinieri. One of the murderers went unpunished, the other got nine months in prison but was soon released. The officer was not charged with any offence.

After the fall of Tobruk, Italian subversive activity increased. A new secret organization was established, which committed sabotage in the harbour of Massawa and in British airfields. Italians did not shrink from murder either. In September 1942 they shot down an antifascist Italian lawyer, LATILLA, who the day before had presided over a meeting of the Unione Nazionale Antifascista.<sup>1</sup> His assassin, an Italian ex-soldier, was arrested in October to be tried for murder, but the Italian police officer let him escape on his way to the court.

Still in October 1942 the British intelligence service captured some correspondence between Italian fascist officers. The letters gave evidence that Italian officers were preparing acts of terrorism on a large scale (among others, against the officers of the British command), organizing armed bands to fight against the British, and associating with the bandits who plotted to assassinate the Emperor of Ethiopia.

Towards the end of 1942 a battle developed between British intelligence officers and a band of armed Italians. Some of the bandits were caught and others escaped. Lots of firearms and ammunition, daggers and bayonets were discovered hidden underground.

Also in December 1942 it was found out that BARILE, the Italian "secretary-general", who had been allowed to raise a relief fund for Italian invalids, had used the money for "helping fugitives and outlaws".

Sir DOUGLAS NEWBOLD (who at the time served in the colonial administration of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan) described the situation in a letter to MARGERY PERHAM: "The present British Military Administration is a cumbersome and centralised condominium (British G.O.C.-cum-British Chief Administrator) superimposed on a large Italian official cadre, an Italian population of 70,000 and at the bottom the Eritrean population . . . as a *tertius flebens* ['odd man out']." He arrived at the conclusion that the anomalies might lead the natives to say: "We were better off under the Italian."<sup>2</sup>

In April 1941 young Eritreans dreaming about union with Ethiopia formed the Eritrean Unionist Party. The British military authorities were from the beginning hostile to this political organization. An official memorandum of June 28, 1941, stated: "Our leniency towards the Italians must be dictated by our interests, and we are not here to strive after a native Utopia."<sup>3</sup>

The party was not originally intended to be a militant organization. It is true that in May 1941 it staged a mass demonstration against the pro-Italian policy of the British, but for a long time after that it only kept addressing petitions to the British authorities. The first such document, dated December 12, 1941, was still written in a moderate tone. It complained about the suffering of Eritreans under Italian colonial rule, and expressed the hope that the British would at last liberate

<sup>1</sup> Among the Italians in Ethiopia there were antifascists, too, who formed an antifascist party. The fascists openly agitated against them and even denounced them to the British authorities, claiming that they played into the hands of Communists. The British also were distrustful of the antifascists but retained fascists in leading posts in the judiciary, police, prison administration and municipal bodies. Fearing hostile reaction on the part of these persons, they refused to give free scope to the antifascists.

<sup>2</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1953), p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 62.



the Eritrean people, who would be willing to shed their blood on the side of the British in the struggle against the Italians. Since the appeal went unheeded, a second document, dated February 26, 1942, used a stronger tone and accused the British of pursuing racist policies against the Eritreans to benefit the Italians.

Despite its solemn promises the British government ignored the will of the Eritrean people and the claim of Ethiopia, and strove to take over the territory or, if it was to be partitioned, to keep the lion's share and cede only a narrow coastal zone to Ethiopia.<sup>1</sup> The British Chief Administrator of Eritrea, Brigadier LONGRIGG, made propaganda for these British schemes in a curious manner. He called together tribal chiefs and other popular representatives, and invited them to express their views on the future of Eritrea. As the Chief Administrator's opposition to union with Ethiopia was common knowledge, the chiefs and the other Eritrean representatives, fearing reprisals, dared not tell frankly that they wished to be united to Ethiopia.

But the majority of the Eritrean people and their leaders insisted resolutely on union. They could not meet in public because the British authorities had prohibited the assembly of more than three persons, so they met secretly in small groups in private houses to discuss the British schemes and state their position. Having thus decided what should be done, they held a sort of secret plebiscite in favour of union with Ethiopia.

On July 23, 1942, upon the initiative of the *New Times and Ethiopia News* edited by SYLVIA PANKHURST, liberal British advocates of the Ethiopian and Eritrean peoples held a conference in London to give expression to their sympathy with Ethiopia and Eritrea. The conference was attended by representatives of a number of liberal organizations as well as many well-known British politicians (Labour M. P. CREECH JONES among them) and diplomatic representatives of Allied powers. The conference took a stand in favour of Ethiopia's claim to the former Italian colonies. It stated in its resolution among other things:

"The Conference affirms the right and need of Ethiopia of access to her ancient seaboard . . .; it urges that such dubious title as Italy had to her colonisation of Ethiopian territory on the Horn of Africa has been forfeited by her repeated aggressions. Ethiopia is the first and most natural claimant in any transfer of territory which may take place in the area concerned."<sup>2</sup>

The British authorities, of course, were aware of the Unionist attitude of the large majority of the Eritreans, as is evidenced by several official documents. In a British report of February 1944 we read the following:

"In Asmara the Irredentist movement has gained a real foothold, especially among priests, intelligentsia, young 'bloods' and certain merchants . . . During January and February activity had reached such a pitch that something had to be done. Meetings were taking place in private houses and in certain native drinking houses where irredentism was discussed in terms which savoured of subversive activity. These native drinking houses appear popular with native police and native visitors from Ethiopia . . ."<sup>3</sup>

The occupiers did everything in their power to scare away the Eritreans from the Unionist movement. Their officials, like LONGRIGG, made anti-Ethiopian propaganda. They even falsified the fact just to weaken the prestige of the Emperor in the eyes

<sup>1</sup> As for the various British schemes, see NEWBOLD's correspondence from the years 1942 and 1943 (quoted by PANKHURST, *op. cit.*, p. 94) as well as S. H. LONGRIGG, *A Short History of Eritrea*, London, 1945, pp. 174-175.

<sup>2</sup> PANKHURST, *op. cit.* (1953), p. 88.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 79.

of the people and to divert them from the Unionist cause. They often used the trick of spreading rumours that some tribe (for instance, the Beni Amer) was against union or that another was in favour of joining the Sudan.

Characteristic of the anti-Ethiopian policy of the British occupiers was the definite sympathy which the British authorities in Eritrea felt for the rebel HAILEMARIAM, who planned a rebellion against the Emperor in the Tigré Province of Ethiopia bordering on Eritrea. A British report quoted by Miss PANKHURST stated the following:

"Credence is given to rumours that Blatta Hailemariam intends to stage another rebellion during the year's rains, the result of which would be to sever Eritrea from the Emperor's territories, and no doubt to divert much public sympathy to the advocates of union with an independent Tigré."<sup>1</sup>

The people of Eritrea, however, were not to be diverted from their aims.

On February 5, 1944, four thousand Eritrean police went on strike; 2,800 of them gathered in front of the police station and informed the British officer on duty of their demands, namely that:

"1. They refused to be judged any longer by Italian Fascist laws which the British authorities maintained.

"2. They protested against a recent order withdrawing their boots, refused to go barefoot, or to wear the uniform instituted by the Italians which included the tarboosh, or fez.

"3. They refused to work under Italian police officers, complaining that when enlisted they were assured that they would work under British officers.

"Unless their grievances were removed they wished to resign."<sup>2</sup>

By acceding to minor demands (boots, British uniforms, etc.) and promising to adjust other grievances the British authorities managed to stop the strike, but Italian police officers, Italian judges and Italian fascist laws were retained, and reprisals followed. They dismissed 150 of the striking constables (selected from those able to read and write!) who were then replaced by recruits from French Equatorial Africa and Yemen, who were ignorant of the language of the local population. Four Eritrean police officers were arrested and imprisoned for participation in the strike.

Though the strike had nothing to do with politics, the spread of the Unionist movement induced the British authorities to take energetic measures against it and to launch a campaign of counter-propaganda.

A few weeks after the strike, on February 24, four educated Eritrean notables were arrested (three of them were merchants, and the fourth, who was very popular with the people, operated a public letter-writing office to help the illiterates). They were charged with having conducted a secret plebiscite and collected signatures to support union with Ethiopia (to offset Brigadier LONGRIGG's action to obtain signatures to a manifesto in favour of extended British rule over Eritrea).

The *New Times and Ethiopia News* edited by Miss PANKHURST, which advocated the interests of Ethiopia and the union of Eritrea to Ethiopia, had from the outset been a pain in the neck of the British authorities. It especially incurred the anger of the British government when in its issue of March 18, 1944, it unmasked the outrageous scheme which the British colonial authorities in the Sudan had concocted to carve out Tigré and Danakil provinces of Ethiopia and to join them up with Eritrea under British rule, and which was disclosed in the *Sudan Star*. The article raised a

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 85.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 79.



violent storm in the House of Commons, where reactionary Conservative members demanded action to stop the publication of the *New Times and Ethiopia News*.

While the British authorities were intriguing against the interests of Ethiopia and Eritrea, British soldiers who had fought for the liberation of the Italian colonies publicly raised their voice in support of Ethiopia's aspirations. In a statement published by the *United Services Review* they emphasized that Britain, which had often in the past left Ethiopia in the lurch and exposed her to the Italian plunderers, was now in duty bound to endorse Ethiopia's claim.<sup>1</sup>

In view of a strong public opinion, it was possible neither to stop the publication of Miss PANKHURST's liberal journal nor to bring in an indictment against the soldiers who took the part of Ethiopia. Consequently, the British authorities decided to intensify their counter-propaganda to besmirch the Unionist movement. The *Eritrean Weekly News*,<sup>2</sup> whose editor was a British major (MUMFORD) assisted by an Eritrean renegade (WALDEAB WOLDEMARIAM) and a Palestine Jew (EDWARD ULLENDORF) as subeditors, started an unbridled propaganda campaign against the Unionist cause. The opening article summed up their position in five points:

"1. Great Britain fought the Italian to give liberty to Ethiopia; therefore, 'Great Britain must be compensated'.

"2. 'Ethiopia cannot manage Eritrea in a spiritual way, because she herself is twisted inside.' 'Eritrea would be a ceaseless trouble to Ethiopia.'

"3. The lowland part of Eritrea should be joined to the Sudan.

"4. The highland part of Eritrea should be joined with Tigrai province of Ethiopia which should be annexed with Axum, the Sacred City of Ethiopia as its capital, and both placed under the protection of Britain for 25 years.

"5. After '25 years, more or less,' the population will be 'invited to explain their ideas', and the protecting Power 'can choose what proposal it likes'."<sup>3</sup>

The newspaper was supposed to open a debate on the future of Eritrea, but the "contributions" it published only supported the anti-Ethiopian and anti-Unionist views, and gave a false picture of the ideas entertained by the Eritrean people.

In November 1944 the editor of the *New Times and Ethiopia News*, Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST, was on a visit to Eritrea for a few days, and was in a position to satisfy herself positively: —

that the Eritreans, except for an insignificant minority, wished Eritrea to be joined to Ethiopia, which they regarded as their motherland;

that the British occupiers governed Eritrea not as a liberated friendly country but as their colony, and treated the people of Ethiopia not as the population of a liberated friendly country but as an oppressed and dispossessed colonial people, while they treated the Italian fascists not as vanquished enemies but as privileged European settlers;

that the British authorities of occupation did not follow the policy and spirit formulated in official statements by the British government, that they pursued an anti-Ethiopian policy (so that they supported even HAILEMARIAM who plotted a

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 88–89.

<sup>2</sup> The newspaper was published by the Local Ministry of Information. Eritreans had no access to a printing press and no permission to publish. The admission of Ethiopian newspapers was permitted only through the Ministry of Information, which undertook to distribute them. The Eritreans did not avail themselves of this possibility, because anyone whom the military authorities regarded as an Ethiopian sympathizer had to reckon with the loss of his liberty or his job.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 91.

rebellion in Ethiopia) and made propaganda (through their press organs) for the dismemberment of Ethiopia and for placing a large area of the country under British colonial rule.<sup>1</sup>

It was in September 1944 that the British government issued the pamphlet *The First to be Freed*, in which it reported in detail on the horrors found by the British army in Somalia and Eritrea after the expulsion of the Italian colonialists.

On October 4 the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was asked in the House of Commons whether, after what the official publication told about the Italian rule of terror, "he will assure the House that His Majesty's Government is opposed to the return of the colonies to Italy, and that their declaration that the Italian Empire in Africa is irrevocably lost, will be adhered to". Foreign Secretary ANTONY EDEN categorically said yes.

What this definite pledge of EDEN was worth appeared from subsequent developments soon. Supporters of the Italian colonialists voiced their opinion one after another through the British press. The *Daily Mail*, the *Catholic Herald* and the *Daily Telegraph* carried articles proposing the return of the ex-Italian colonies on the grounds that it was the only way of restoring Italy's trust in Britain or, again, of preventing a revival of Italian nationalism from disturbing the peace of the world. Even a prominent Labour M.P. (SHINWELL) expressed the opinion that some of the ex-colonies could be returned to a non-fascist Italian government in case their inhabitants did not object (!).

Also in the House of Commons another Labour M.P. (J. B. HYND) asked the Foreign Secretary "whether his attention had been drawn to the demonstrations which took place in the ex-Italian Colony of Eritrea in January and February of this year in favour of reunion of that territory with Ethiopia, and whether, in fulfilment of the promise made in R.A.F. leaflets dropped in Eritrea, the Government would now declare its intention that the principles of the Atlantic Charter shall govern any decision concerning the future administration of these African territories now liberated from Italian rule, and the occupants given full and free opportunity of indicating their desires in this connexion."

The government spokesman (RICHARD LAW), in contrast to the Foreign Secretary's recent statement, replied that "interest of the kind... has been evinced in certain quarters in Eritrea", but the question of the future of Eritrea "must await consideration by the United Nations at the conclusion of peace".<sup>2</sup>

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In February 1945 the Emperor HAILE SELASSIE of Ethiopia met President ROOSEVELT and Secretary of State STETTINIUS on board a U.S. warship, and later he conferred with CHURCHILL and EDEN. They all agreed to Ethiopia's aspirations to recover Eritrea and get thereby an outlet to the sea.

On April 20, 1945, Miss PANKHURST's *New Times and Ethiopia News* again held a conference of supporters of Ethiopia (diplomats, professors, etc.). Having heard the editor's report on the lamentable conditions of Eritrea and the rapid progress of reconstruction in Ethiopia, the participants took stand in favour of Ethiopia's claims. In the resolution adopted on a motion of JOMO KENYATTA, who attended

<sup>1</sup> The experience of this visit is related in detail by the author in her book *Ethiopia and Eritrea*, Chapter VI, pp. 95–113.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 114–115.



the conference, they demanded that the principles of the Atlantic Charter should be applied with respect to Eritrea and Somalia, and that Great Britain should fulfil her pledges made to the Eritrean people regarding the union of Eritrea with Ethiopia.

Meanwhile the British Ministry of Information branch in Eritrea and Brigadier LONGRIGG, the former Governor of Eritrea, in England openly agitated in opposition to the reunion of Eritrea with Ethiopia and for the continuance of British rule over Eritrea.

In mid-September 1945 the Foreign Ministers of the great powers met to discuss the treaty of peace to be concluded with Italy. Invitations to the meeting had been issued to representatives of belligerent Allied powers, and even Italy was allowed to be represented, to state her claims and take part in the discussion, but Ethiopia, who first had taken up arms against the fascist aggressor and who had suffered most of all as a victim of Italian aggression, was not invited in spite of a firm protest of the Emperor, who was only allowed to submit his views in writing.

As far as the Italian colonies were concerned, the Foreign Ministers did not decide yet "in view of the complexity" of the question which called for detailed study, "making the fullest possible use of the plan proposed by the United States delegation, and taking into account the views expressed by other delegations". (The said U.S. proposal was to place some or all of the ex-Italian colonies under Italian trusteeship.)

On September 21, 1945, the Emperor HAILE SELASSIE said in an interview to Reuter's correspondent in Addis Ababa that he had sent an official memorandum to the Council of Foreign Ministers in London, demanding that Eritrea and ex-Italian Somaliland should not be returned to Italy but reannexed to Ethiopia, "not as a recompense for 10 years' struggle against the Axis, but as territories incontestably belonging to the Ethiopian Empire since before the Christian era and stolen through Italian aggression."<sup>1</sup>

Two days later, on September 23, a large crowd of people assembled in Asmara. The British Chief Administrator was requested to dispatch their appeal by cable to the Council of Foreign Ministers meeting in London. The Chief Administrator forwarded the cable to his superior in Cairo. Whether the cable reached its destination is still an open question.

In the following days mass demonstrations followed one another in Ethiopia, too. In Addis Ababa and other towns of Ethiopia (Harar, Diredawa, Makalle, Addigat, Jimma, Goré) Eritrean and Somali residents demonstrated demanding the union of Eritrea and Somalia with Ethiopia, and sending dozens of cables and petitions to the Council of Foreign Ministers.

The question of the future of Eritrea and Somaliland, however, remained one of the delicate problems waiting to be solved in the post-war years.

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<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 118-119.

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## LIBERIA

Liberia, though being an economically and politically underdeveloped country which did not enter the war until it was closing to its end, was of twofold importance for the Allies from the very beginning of the war:

1. In the years of war, when the largest rubber-producing countries (Indonesia, Indochina, Malaya) were inaccessible for the Allies, Liberia was the principal rubber supplier.

2. Liberia was an air and naval base of utmost value. The country served as a transit station for air transport between America and Asia and — from the beginning of the war, but mainly from 1941 on when the Mediterranean had ceased to be a safe sea route for the Allies — for arms shipments by sea from America to the Near and the Middle East.

In July 1941, still before the United States entered the war, the Liberian government and the Pan-American Airways signed a treaty by which the said company was granted exclusive rights to keep up air traffic between Liberia and the United States.

After entering the war the United States government started to intensify its military and economic penetration of Liberia. The first American troops arrived in Liberia on March 12, 1942. At the end of the same month the two governments signed an agreement respecting "defense areas", under which, to ensure "additional protection" to Liberia, the United States was entitled to construct and operate military and commercial airports, to construct roads and fortifications, storage facilities and housing for personnel, and had "generally the right to do any and all things necessary to insure the efficient operation, maintenance and protection of such defense facilities as may be established".

By this agreement the Liberian government granted exemption from taxes and customs duties for all equipment, supplies and materials for the construction and operation of the airports, roads, etc., and for the personal needs of the American military and civil personnel and their families, as well as personal exemption for the U.S. citizens involved from Liberian regulations concerning passports, visas and residence permits. The agreement was valid only for the two "defense areas" (Roberts Fields and Fisherman Lake), but with the proviso that, "If other defense areas of this kind are deemed necessary in the future, their location will be fixed by mutual agreement." The agreement was concluded "for the duration of the existing war and for a period not to exceed six months thereafter". In it the U.S. government promised to give Liberia "such aid as may be possible in the circumstances", but instead of concrete commitments it confined itself to hazy generalities ("certain



monetary aids for defense purposes, certain assistance in the organization and training of the Liberian military forces and certain other assistance of a similar nature").

Three months later, on June 22, new American troops arrived in Liberia, landing at a new air base built for the purpose.

On October 24, 1942, it was decreed by law that the U.S. dollar was recognized as legal tender, in addition to the pound sterling, in the whole of Liberia.

In March 1943 the Liberian government, answering an invitation from the government of the United States, sent a delegation to an international economic conference. In May of the same year President E. BARCLAY and President-elect TUBMAN,<sup>1</sup> returning President ROOSEVELT's visit to Liberia, went to the United States. Shortly after they came home, on June 8, 1943, the two governments signed an agreement respecting "principles applying to mutual aid for defense". This so-called "lend-lease" agreement only confirmed and complemented the agreement of March 1942 on "defense areas". The first two articles laid down that the government of the United States would supply Liberia such defence services "as the President of the United States of America shall authorize to be transferred or provided", and that the government of Liberia should provide to the U.S. government such services "as it may be in a position to supply". All the other articles contained was a detailed list of the duties and obligations of the Liberian government under the agreement (it should not transfer to anyone anything received as aid from the United States; what it was to do or pay for the U.S. aid should be determined by the President of the United States, who shall also decide what defence articles, facilities, etc. Liberia should be bound to restitute as property useful in the defence of the United States, etc.).

On October 15, 1943, the training of the Liberian army (called the Frontier Force) began under American officers at the Barclay practice camp in Monrovia.

On the last day of 1943 the U.S. government and the Liberian government signed an agreement on the construction of a port at Monrovia. The U.S. government undertook, with reference to the agreement of June 8, 1943, to grant the Liberian government a credit for the construction of a port at the estuary of the St. Paul river, or at any other appropriate site, in the vicinity of Monrovia and Marshall. The amount and terms of the credit should be fixed by the U.S. authority in charge of lend-lease transactions. For the effectuation of the necessary surveys as well as the construction of roads, buildings and the port the Liberian government had to enter into a contract with an American company approved by the government of the United States.<sup>2</sup> The plans and cost estimates made by the company should be sub-

<sup>1</sup> WILLIAM VACANARAT SHADRACH TUBMAN was born of a family of old American Negro immigrants in the township of Harper, East Liberia, in 1895. (His father, ALEXANDER TUBMAN, was a Methodist minister, one-time Speaker of the House of Representatives.) He was educated at the seminar of Cape Palmas, where he obtained his degree in law. From 1917 he was a practising lawyer, and in 1922 he entered government service. First he was a court employee, and later became a district attorney. At the same time he engaged in politics and in 1923 he was elected to the 10-member Senate as representative of the Whig Party. From 1928 he was also active as a Methodist lay preacher, and as such he represented Liberia at a Methodist Conference in Kansas City, U.S.A. In 1930, when a scandal erupted in the wake of a League of Nations inquiry, as attorney of Vice-President YANCY he was compelled to resign from the Senate, but he was re-elected in 1934. From 1937 to 1943 he was Vice-President of the Supreme Court. In 1943, with the support of the outgoing President, E. BARCLAY, he was elected President of Liberia.

<sup>2</sup> Talks with the appointed firm, the Raymond Concrete Pile Company, had been under way from the beginning of 1943, and specialists of the company arrived in Monrovia early in May 1943 to continue the negotiations and preparations on the spot.

mitted to both governments for approval. Still before the construction of the port works and access roads, the Liberian government had to conclude a contract with the approved company for the operation of the port during the full period of amortization, commencing from the date of completion of the port installations or from such earlier date as the port was able to start operation. The Liberian government had to make the necessary land area available to the company free of charge. Under Article 7 of the agreement the Liberian government granted the United States government the right to establish, use, maintain, improve, supplement, guard and control such naval, air and military facilities and installations at the site of the port "as may be desired by the Government of the United States of America for the protection of the strategic interests of the United States of America in the South Atlantic".

Article 8 of the agreement granted the United States government full exemption from the payment of Liberian taxes of any kind in connection with the construction, operation and maintenance of those facilities.

The agreement provided that, after full amortization, control and ownership of the port facilities and installations together with the roads should pass to the Liberian government. If, however, during the period of amortization the U.S. government, making use of its right ensured in Article 7, decided to construct a base in the port or in its vicinity, the operation of the port should be placed under the control of a Port Authority to be constituted in a form mutually satisfactory to the two governments.

On the day when the agreement was signed the Liberian Parliament authorized the government to appropriate the area needed for the construction of the port installations.

The same day the pound sterling was withdrawn from circulation, and thus the American dollar was made definitively the only legal tender in Liberia.

On January 3, 1944, WILLIAM V. S. TUBMAN was inaugurated as President of the Republic of Liberia. When taking office, President TUBMAN set himself the aim to secure the independence of the country, its economic advancement, democratic internal development and active participation in international politics.

On January 27, 1944, Liberia formally joined the Allies and declared war on the Axis Powers. From that time on the relationship between Liberia and the United States became still closer. What was needed to ensure the independence and economic development of the country was first of all the rehabilitation of its finances. President TUBMAN thought this could be achieved by yielding more place than hitherto to U.S. capital penetration and developing the relations of Liberia with the United States on all lines.

In March 1944 the United States established a Public Health Service Mission in Liberia. On April 27, 1944, the Liberian government signed the final contract with the Raymond Concrete Pile Company for the enlargement of the Monrovia port, and the work of construction started on May 1.

From then onwards different American specialists and missions came one after another to Liberia: agricultural experts in September, economic mission in November, etc., etc.

How important it was for the American government to draw Liberia into its economic orbit is best characterized by the fact that the then Secretary of State of the United States, E. R. STETTINIUS, on his way home from the Yalta Conference in February 1945, stopped at Monrovia to pay a "goodwill visit" to President TUBMAN.

In accordance with President TUBMAN's foreign policy conception, the Liberian government as early as 1944 strove for active participation in the work of the various



international organizations. Liberian delegations went to the United States to attend an international monetary conference, a civil aviation conference, an international labour conference, etc. Liberia also sent its delegation to the second session of the "United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration" (U.N.R.R.A.) and to the United Nations Conference on International Organization held at San Francisco in spring of 1945.

The construction of airfields and a seaport, the intensification of economic relations, participation in international political life are so many steps forward to further economic, cultural and political advancement, creating new avenues of enrichment for the American-born privileged upper stratum of Liberians (functionaries, merchants). However, the new policy did, for the time being, nothing to improve the situation of the African masses — chiefly those inhabiting the inland areas of the country — and even brought new hardships to the populations of certain districts. The inhabitants of Krutown, for example, were evicted in connection with the port construction and were settled in Bushrod Island, far from the mainland. As regards the President's ideas about democratization ("native" participation in the affairs of government), the first steps had been taken during the war. In the spring of 1945 TUBMAN summoned the chiefs and talked with them many times. From that time on a parliamentary seat was reserved also to an elective representative of each of the three districts situated far from the coast. (Until then only the coast districts had two members each, altogether 12, in the 31-member House of Representatives.)

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## PART EIGHT

### DISINTEGRATION OF THE COLONIAL SYSTEM IN BLACK AFRICA



## INTRODUCTION

*Changes in the International Power Relations and the Life of African Peoples*

The post-war period is the period of liquidation of the colonial system.

The disintegration of the colonial system was made possible and even inevitable by the substantial changes which had taken place in the international power relationships and in the life of the African peoples during the years and as a consequence of World War II.

Power relationships between the capitalist and the socialist system have shifted mainly in favour of the latter. Before the war there existed just one socialist country, surrounded on all sides by capitalist countries — the Soviet Union, which was a weak power in comparison with the developed Western capitalist states. After World War II, the Soviet Union has become one of the politically and economically most powerful states of the world, a great power which is now rivalling with the United States of America, and which, in economic and military strength, far surpasses all capitalist powers, except the United States. A further consequence of the war has been the emergence of a number of countries engaged in building up socialism: the world socialist system has come into existence. Capitalism has ceased to be the only world system. The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries have centred their external policies on the liquidation of the colonial system of imperialism.

There has also been a shift in the power relations among imperialist powers to the advantage of the United States. Stripped of their colonial possessions, Germany, Italy and Japan have ceased to be great powers, and the two most powerful and richest imperialist states of Europe, Great Britain and France, owing to two World Wars, have been reduced to second-grade big powers, economically, militarily and politically dependent upon the most powerful and richest imperialist power of the world, the United States of America.

Power relationships have changed also between imperialists and the subject colonial peoples. World War II brought about the situation which LENIN had specified as a precondition for any revolutionary transformation: the situation in which the ruling classes are unable to keep the power in their hands as before, and those oppressed refuse to be held in continued subjection.

The war years occasioned important changes in the stratification of African society. Owing to the forcible increase of production the number of *workers* grew in most countries of Black Africa, and the war-time experiences caused an increasing number of workers of the post-war era to wake up to national and class consciousness.

The post-war development of the entire *peasantry*, on the other hand, was influenced by the fact that new elements of farming populations joined the ranks of the working class (increasing urbanization) and that the working class also underwent certain



changes. The forced economic exploitation of the colonies created new opportunities as well as difficulties for the peasantry.

To increase the production of the raw materials and agricultural crops required by the conduct of war, in some countries of Black Africa (especially in West Africa) the colonialists were compelled to allow a larger scope than before to capitalist development and thereby to the strengthening of the African national bourgeoisie. However, the nascent and ascendant African *capitalists* on the way to wealth at every step saw their free development prevented by the privileged position of the monopoly interests owned by foreign capitalists in the colonies.

The war years witnessed a significant development among the African *intellectuals*, particularly owing to the African students in England and America, who got acquainted there with the institutions and ideas of Western bourgeois democracy, established contact with local liberal and democratic quarters and even with progressive-minded politicians.

These changes gave an impetus to the process of detribalization that had started in Black Africa during the inter-war years.

Parallel to the changing power relations and social conditions, great progress — a veritable revolution — took place in the thinking of broad popular masses of Black Africa. The experiences gained in the war widened the horizon of millions of Africans, who had come to see the difference between bourgeois democracy and fascism. The propaganda and the promises of the imperialist Allied powers led them astray and brought them closer to the “democratic” colonialists, and at the same time awakened them to national consciousness and greatly stimulated their longing for freedom and independence. They were deeply impressed by the realization that a socialist great power, the Soviet Union, had abolished national oppression and capitalist exploitation and, with a government of free workers and peasants at the helm of the country, had become one of the most powerful states in the world.

The African aspirations for independence were given a new impulse by the total defeat of fascism and later, in the first post-war years, by the fact that, owing in part to the war itself and in part to the strengthening of the independence movements, the three largest ex-colonial countries of the world, China, India and Indonesia, had broken away definitively from the world imperialist system and formed independent national states.

Finally, in the second decade following the war, the example of African countries winning independence one after another incited with irresistible force all the others to fight for freedom.

The change in the international power relations was reflected also in the fact that after World War II the League of Nations, which had been composed almost exclusively of advanced capitalist countries, was replaced by the United Nations Organization, in which newly independent ex-colonial countries are also full members.

The Charter of the United Nations made it a duty of the colonial powers to submit to the UN Trusteeship Council annual reports on the situation in the trust territories and “non-self-governing territories” under their administration. It was due to this provision that, in order to conceal their continued practice of unrestrained oppression and exploitation, the colonial powers, especially France and Britain, brought themselves to introduce certain reforms which, though producing no essential change, nevertheless opened the way towards independence.

The establishment of the United Nations made it possible, on the one hand, for the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries to make world public opinion

alive to the cause of the liberation of colonial countries and peoples and, on the other hand, for the Asian-African ex-colonial countries, acceding to independence one after another and taking their seats in the United Nations, to come out day by day for the independence of the fraternal nations still suffering under the yoke of colonialism in Asia and Africa.

### *Changes in the Colonial Policies of Imperialism. “Neocolonialism”*

The changed power relations (the existence of the world socialist system, the new leading position of the United States, the incipient revolutionism of the subject peoples) compelled the European colonial powers, primarily Britain and France, to make changes in their colonial policies regarding both the struggle between them for the colonies and that fought against the oppressed peoples in the colonies themselves.

Until then Britain and France had fought first for the partition and later for the repartition of colonial territories. The United States, which had come late for the partition of the world, raising the slogan of “open-door policy”, strove not so much to acquire territories as to encroach rather upon the colonial markets of its imperialist rivals, to impose its economic and political influence upon those territories. The same policy was pursued by several other capitalist countries which had missed the bus for the partitioning, principally Japan, and Germany which had lost her colonies. Now that the power relations were shaping so as to make it clear that the colonial system was not to be maintained in its old form for a long time, Great Britain and France felt obliged to change their colonial policies. They did not give up their aims but they replaced the old methods of colonialism with new ones which were more suitable for modern times. The essence and the goals of their colonial policies had not changed even after World War II. The only difference was that, being pressed by the changed situation and having realized that the old methods were no longer fit to secure the big superprofits pocketed before, they introduced a more flexible policy. They still did their utmost to retain their remaining colonies, kept delaying the granting of independence as long as they could, and yielded only to pressure. They applied new methods in the colonial administration, introduced delusive administrative reforms one after another, but they took positive steps only under compulsion and gradually, only where and when the granting of independence could no longer be delayed, but wherever they could they went all lengths to hold the oppressed peoples in continued subjection and to have their every attempt at liberation nipped in the bud.

Britain and France, following the example of the United States, used no endeavour to acquire new territories, nor did they try to preserve their colonies as such at all costs. They confined themselves to upholding and strengthening their existing key economic positions and protected them against increasing attempts at encroachment by their imperialist rivals. At the same time they tried hard to promote their political influence, in case of the advent of independence, by applying the principle “divide and rule”, this time-tested method of political domination.

The most typical feature of this method was the “training of leaders” realized in different ways. In this respect the colonialists devised two tactics to be employed at will, depending on the circumstances. First, to win the leaders of national independence movements over to the promotion of their policy by bribes, promises, positions and deceitful propaganda. Second, where the first trick seemed ineffective, to



arrest the leaders, send them to prison or into exile, expecting this treatment to bring the unruly to heel and force them to enter their service.

And they did succeed in switching over to this new colonial policy ("neocolonialism"), but it was not a hundred-per-cent success. Where the switch-over to the new policy took place, it did only in part. Even where the neocolonialists employed new methods, they tried to retain many elements of the old system. Neocolonialism is not a substitute for the old colonialism, it is but one of the variants of modern colonial policies beside the old colonial policy still encountered in several places and in many relations. Yet the colonialist governments of three capitalist countries — the fascist rulers of Portugal, the Republic of South Africa, and Southern Rhodesia — have not drawn the lesson from the changes that had occurred in the world during the past three decades, and in their colonial policies they are as far behind as they were thirty years ago. The only change in their policies in the meantime has been the introduction of a still more ruthless racist colonial regime of oppression than before.

#### *Features of the Struggle among Imperialists in the Post-War Period. "Collective Colonialism"*

In the post-World War II period of the general crisis of capitalism, as a consequence of the disintegration of the colonial system, the conflicts and the competition between the ex-colonial powers and other imperialist powers have been sharpening. With the conclusion of the struggle for political repartition the centre of interest has shifted to the struggle for the repartition of the markets and the promotion of political influence. At the same time those powers are all compelled to hold together to block the African efforts at national liberation and the ever increasing influence of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries among the African nations. This influence helps the still dependent African peoples to attain freedom and the already liberated African countries to lay the foundations of genuine independence.

This union and collaboration of the imperialist powers against the aspirations for independence of the African peoples in the period of disintegration of the colonial system are a general phenomenon whose necessity the imperialists — first of all the Americans — try to justify theoretically as well. In their view, in order that the liberated Asian and African countries might enjoy the greatest "blessings" of advanced capitalism without becoming politically dependent on any developed capitalist country, the former colonial countries must not allow their economies to be influenced and directed by the ex-colonial powers alone, and the advanced capitalist states have to join forces and act in concert in those countries ("collective colonialism").

The British and French neocolonialists, just like the U.S. imperialists (who pose as anticolonialists and who in words are in favour of independence for the colonies), consistently support the efforts of their allies to continue holding their existing dependencies in colonial subjection. The most glaring examples of this practice are given by the American, British and French imperialists who supply arms to the fascist settlers of Southern Rhodesia and who render the colonialist regimes — either overt or disguised — support every time the question of the Portuguese colonies, South Africa, South West Africa or Southern Rhodesia is discussed in the United Nations.

The union and collaboration of the imperialist powers against the African aspirations for independence and the influence of the socialist countries, however, cannot at all eliminate, it can only conceal, the differences arising between them and their mutual intrigues.

#### *The Internal Struggles of the Colonialists after World War II*

Amidst the crisis of the colonial system the internal conflicts of the colonialists are growing more and more acute. So are, first of all, the conflicts between the British government and the European settlers living in African countries where they constitute the majority (Kenya and Southern Rhodesia in the first place). The British government is compelled to adopt a more flexible policy make concessions to the Africans, and — by safeguarding as far as possible the British monopoly interests — agree that the administration of African countries should be taken over progressively by Africans and, in the last analysis, that those countries should recover their independence. This new policy of the British government is diametrically opposed to the interests and aspirations of white settlers in Africa.

But the camp of the settlers is not united either. Some put up increasing resistance to the gradual enforcement of this policy. Others, on the contrary, try to find compromise solutions by lowering their demands.

The government of the colonialist power pretends to welcome and promote liberalization among settlers in the colonial countries, while secretly supporting the conservative groups and enlisting their help to forestall independence or to delay its granting as long as possible.

After a colonial country has won independence, the intransigent settler groups are altogether ousted from their positions, only the liberals adopting a more flexible policy remain, and the colonialist power tries to make use of them for maintaining as many as possible of its economic and political positions in the new, apparently independent state.

Another, more general, aspect of the internal conflicts of the colonialists is the struggle between political parties of the imperialist "metropolitan country". The bourgeois-liberal and social-democratic parties of the opposition — even those which do not object to the continuance of the colonial system — are persistently critical of the colonial policies of the imperialist governments, they act as spokesmen for the oppressed and exploited colonial peoples, they demand reforms, and so forth. Although they are far from sincere in this stance, and their oppositionism is meant merely to serve their own political aims, they nevertheless play a certain positive role, because even if they achieve no success, their action is still useful in so far as they attract the attention of their countries' public opinion to the horrors of the colonial system and the vicious policy of the colonialists.

Those parties pursue their liberal policy, which sometimes even seems to be anti-colonialist, only as long as they are in opposition. Experience shows that, if and when they take over the government, they brazenly continue the same imperialist colonial policy that they have thus far attacked and criticized. A classical example of this metamorphosis was the policy enforced by British Labour governments from 1945 to 1951 and after 1964.

#### *The Colonial Policy of the United States*

Among the promoters of neocolonialism an important part is played by the United States, which also replaced its old colonial policy (characterized by the so-called "open-door policy") with a new one, and a separate chapter of neocolonialism is made up of the infiltration attempts of the ex-colonial powers (Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Italy).



Today the United States rests no longer satisfied with free economic penetration into the African countries, but it is striving to oust the former colonial masters entirely and to enforce, under cover of independence, its own political and economic control everywhere in Africa.

The American penetration of Africa had taken a sudden turn already during the war. United States imports from the African countries (including North Africa) prior to the war amounted to nearly \$81 million a year; by the end of the war this figure rose to \$296 million, and it reached \$1,172 million in 1958. But since the end of the war U.S. capitalists reckon with the African countries as merely major sources of raw materials and seller's markets, though in the first place as outlets for capital exports, for investments yielding very high profits. During the same period (between 1940 and 1958) U.S. public and private investment is officially reported to have risen twentyfold. Direct investment in African countries by American interests in 1958 amounted to \$789 million, that is twice as much as in 1950. In 1959 already over 200 American companies had interests in Africa, mainly in the extractive industries producing strategic raw materials. The profits of U.S. capital invested in Africa averaged around 30 per cent, which is 4 to 5 per cent more than similar profits made anywhere else in the world.

In spite of this speedy growth the economic positions of British and French monopoly capital in the African countries are still today much stronger than the positions of U.S. monopoly capital. Still in 1959 two-thirds of the external trade of African countries was transacted by European firms, while the share of the United States was hardly more than ten per cent, the total of U.S. capital investment being less than 40 per cent of all British capital investment. But as things now stand, the trend is towards the strengthening of U.S. positions and the gradual ousting of European interests.

The government of the United States and U.S. monopoly capitalists do everything in their power to promote this trend. They are granting the African countries loans, credits, and "economic aid" in the most diverse forms and ways. The forms and ways are different, but the purpose of their business is one and the same: in the guise of economic assistance, to force the newly independent African nations to further U.S. policy objectives, to secure high profits for the U.S. monopoly capitalists, and to build strategical outposts and military bases on the African continent for the aggressive purposes of U.S. imperialism.

More than half the U.S. capital investment in African countries falls to the Republic of South Africa, where the American South Africa Company founded in 1958 is eagerly buying up shares of gold-mining companies. Also growing from year to year are the U.S. investments in the Rhodesias, where U.S. capital controls one-third of copper production and has big interests in the cobalt, chromium and asbestos mines.

The U.S. penetration of Africa is not confined to the granting of loans and credits and aids for political or military purposes. American specialists, advisers, instructors are sent by the hundred to African countries, American youths have for years been recruited for the so-called "Peace Corps", etc. Also here the purpose is essentially the same as with economic penetration: to win the young independent African countries over to the side of U.S. imperialism.

When speaking of the colonial practices of the American imperialists, mention should be made of the double-faced policy pursued by the U.S. government in the United Nations and other international organizations. In the interest of their increasing economic penetration of the countries of Black Africa and their growing

political influence they leave no stone unturned to win the sympathy of the Africans. They pose as defenders of the oppressed African peoples, as principled opponents of the colonial system, they formulate plans and programmes of assistance to economically underdeveloped African countries, and so forth; while at the same time they provide material, and even military support to the colonial policies of European powers, their NATO allies, to their plots, political actions and aggressive acts directed against the African peoples. The most typical example of this double-faced U.S. policy is the attitude assumed by the United States government and its official representatives in every instance where they have to take stand on the questions of Angola, the Congo and South Africa.

#### *The Policies of the Ex-Colonial Imperialist Powers towards the Countries of Black Africa*

The aims and methods of the ex-colonial powers (Federal Republic of Germany, Italy, Japan) are different, but their essence is the same: to grasp every opportunity to get hold of various positions of the colonialists, both in the already independent and in the still subject countries of Africa.

From this point of view the most important of the three countries in question is the Federal Republic of Germany. We have seen that, after losing their African possessions, already in the inter-war period, not only the Nazis but the entire reactionary *German* bourgeoisie made desperate propaganda for the return of the colonies.<sup>1</sup> Today the Federal government of Germany pursues a hypocritical policy. In statements, books and articles they try to make it appear as if they had definitively renounced demanding the return of their former colonies, and as if they were striving only to establish mutually advantageous economic relations with Africa and, over and above that, to promote the economic development of African countries by according them economic and technical assistance without political strings attached. The fact is that, on the one hand, they display feverish activity for economic penetration into the African countries, and, on the other, contrary to their statements intended to mislead world public opinion, on frequent occasions (again in statements, articles and books) they rehash their old demand for the return of the ex-German colonies, that is, for the Federal Republic of Germany's expansion into a colonial power.

Former Vice-Chancellor BLÜCHER in Bonn voiced the German claim to colonies as far back as 1951. He wrote in the Stuttgart paper *Aussenpolitik*, No. 3 of 1951: "Of the members of the European Economic Community Germany is practically the only state that has no colonial basis and whose agricultural basis also is almost ridiculously weak . . ."

C.D.U. deputy GUSTAV ADOLF GEDAT in 1954 wrote a book, *Europe's Future is in Africa*, in which he stated among other things: "We must not pretend to be guided by the sole desire of helping Africa, as has so often been claimed in the past, for this lie has brought us bitter fruit. That continent is needed to save Europe, and just because we need it for our own sake we must not surrender it to others."

HITLER's one-time Finance Minister, the banker H. SCHACHT, told the Paris paper *Tribune des Nations* in July 1955 that his idea was that the Federal Republic of Germany ought to restore the German colonial empire in a new form, for which pur-

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, pp. 127-131.



pose, however, economic expansion alone was insufficient, it must be coupled with cultural and political institutions.

Bundestag President GERSTENMAIER complained in the Bavarian radio on January 2, 1957, that West Germany was still not a world power, and proceeded to explain: "This, of course, does not mean that we should always play the role of disinterested spectators. What is to happen in Africa, thus also in Central Africa, in the next twenty years will concern not only the British, the Belgians, the French and the Portuguese, but it certainly will interest all of Europe, including us Germans."

The movement called "Volksbewegung für Kaiser und Reich", which unites the monarchist elements of West Germany, wrote in its publication entitled *Kaiser und Reich* in November 1957: "The German colonies were under League of Nations mandate from 1920, and now they are placed under United Nations trusteeship. Germany cannot be denied the right to possess these territories. This right of possession should be settled anew."

The periodical *Deutsche Afrika-Orient-Informationen*, published in Bad Godesberg, wrote in early 1958: "The Federal Republic can lay claim to the stolen Protectorates, which belong to us by God and by right . . . It is our duty not merely to act in Africa but to act for the Reich to go back to Africa."

The post-war colonial policy of the *Italian* imperialists differs from that of the Germans. Being aware that, owing to the changes in the international power relationships, there is no way of recovering their former colonies, they make neither efforts nor propaganda for this purpose. They are all the more active, however, in trying to preserve and strengthen the economic positions they have built up in their former colonies in Africa. At the same time, in the arena of international politics where colonial issues, the aspirations for independence of non-self-governing territories, are in question, they always lend unreserved support to the reactionary efforts of European colonialist powers as well as of the United States.

Although as a defeated country *Japan* has lost considerable colonial positions, while being a newly found ally of her one-time archenemy, the United States of America, she enjoys certain advantages in her relations with African countries and has managed to retain her old positions in Africa.

In the light of the changed power relationships, however, the Japanese imperialists shifted their tactics: before the war, in a manner befitting their great-power status and their chauvinistic mentality, they had been condescending to the peoples of the economically undeveloped and politically dependent colonial territories, but after the war, in order to facilitate Japanese economic penetration of the newly independent Afro-Asian countries, they have resorted to a new tactical weapon — that of flirtation. This policy manifests itself in active Japanese participation in all manner of conferences and congresses of Asian-African countries, furthermore in Japanese co-operation with former colonial countries within the ever larger and stronger Asian and African groups in the United Nations.

### *Independence Movements after World War II*

As can be seen, the war years were unpropitious to the development of independence movements in Black Africa. What is more, with few exceptions (South Africa!), those movements during the war came to an almost complete standstill. On the other hand, the war-time changes cleared the way for a post-war upsurge. But the character and the methods of the movements changed.

The peoples of Black Africa, who until then had only been on the defensive in most cases, went over to the offensive everywhere. The liberation movements became more and more generally characterized by conscious, organized action. Political parties and independence movements sprang up in almost all countries of Black Africa where there had been none before. These parties and movements, despite the fact that they proclaim differing political opinions and entertain differing strategical and tactical conceptions, display two main features. First, the foremost point of all their political programmes is the achievement or consolidation of independence as a final objective. Second, the organization, leadership and direction of these parties are preponderantly in the hands of African politicians who come from among educated Africans of different class extraction and who are democratically-minded politicians of more or less experience in the freedom struggle.

The motive forces of the struggle for independence, however, came from all strata of African societies. Among those participating in the organization, work and struggle of the movement were the most conscious elements of the African working class and peasantry, a great part of the African national bourgeoisie and intelligentsia, in many places traditional tribal rulers and even feudal elements.

Despite the favourable circumstances the movements are hindered from developing by a multitude of factors.

Among the main obstacles to successful struggle for independence are the tribal differences. Tribalism has already begun disintegrating, but this is an extremely slow process. Tribal affiliations are still very strong with the vast majority of Africans, whose attitudes are influenced by tribal conflicts rather than either by their class relations or by imperialist oppression.

Another retarding factor is the lack of unity. A considerable part of national bourgeoisie and most of the tribal headmen keep aloof from the independence movement, and help the colonialists by active or passive attitudes.

The independence movement itself is not united either. Even large numbers of the capitalists and chiefs who take an active part in the movement, as well as many intellectuals who lead the movement, pursue a policy of compromise instead of following a consistent anti-imperialist line, and are disposed to rest satisfied with partial reforms instead of fighting for the liquidation of the colonial system. There are among them traitors who are guided only by their own personal or class interests, for the sake of which they abandon the interests of their people, and there are those who are frankly hostile to imperialism and colonialism, but who pursue false ideas and apply the wrong tactics in the struggle for independence.

A further hindering factor is the struggle for power among opportunist leaders of various organizations and movements.

Consequently the struggle for the liquidation of the colonial system is at the same time a struggle between reformism and revolutionism inside African society.

The greatest obstacle on the road of the independence movements, of course, is the colonial regime imposed by the imperialists: the policy of terror, screened by double-dealing demagoguery, of the British, French and Belgian neocolonialists, and the overt terror and racial discrimination entertained by Portuguese, South African and Southern Rhodesian fascists.

But the African freedom fighters are not alone. They are assisted in their struggle, above all, by several of the African nations which have already won independence as well as by the socialist countries.

The independence movements of African peoples have been effectively helped by the activities of some liberal-minded personalities of the imperialist colonial powers



(the Rev. MICHAEL SCOTT and Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST from England, the American Negro professor BURGHARDT W. DUBOIS, and others).

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There are countries in Black Africa where the political struggle for independence was or is waged by a single party or a single organization of national liberation (or independence) movement, and there are others in which a number of parties (organizations) were or are active.

On the questions of "a single party or many parties" two opposing views are encountered among the freedom fighters and their partisans in Africa. There are those who think that, in order to be successful in the struggle against the imperialist government of a colonial power (or, as the case may be, against the settlers' rule), the independence movement of an African country should be directed by a single united party. Others, however, are of the opinion that an African colony can be transformed into an independent democratic state only if in such a country, just as in the Western bourgeois-democratic states, several political parties are functioning whose polemics, discussions and political struggles might lead to shaping the majority opinion which, in conformity with the principle of democracy, must be the standard prevailing in the solution of any problem that might arise.

To accept either of these views as generally valid is wrong. Whether the people of any given African country need a single united party or many parties for the attainment or consolidation of their independence must and can be sensibly decided only by taking into careful consideration all facts and data of the country concerned (national structure and composition of the population; historical experiences; tactics and methods applied there by the colonial imperialists, etc.).

### *The Birth of Independent States in Africa*

The granting of independence to the countries of Black Africa, which the great imperialist powers had solemnly promised (in the Atlantic Charter and in numerous statements by their leading statesmen) still during the war, was dragged out for over two decades.

The imperialists gave as the main reason for this delay that the colonial peoples had to be properly prepared for independence, because those nations did not have the necessary number of qualified administrators, engineers, doctors, and so on, and they were not experienced enough to set up by themselves legislative and executive organs befitting a modern democratic state and to handle their affairs.

This spurious argument was adequately refuted by President SÉKOU TOURÉ of Guinea, who said at the 15th session of the United Nations General Assembly "that all peoples, at all times, are capable of governing themselves and that the only peoples incapable of administering their own affairs are colonized peoples." How, indeed, could such people be adequately prepared for governing their country when from times immemorial the colonialists had done their utmost to prevent them from being prepared. Those peoples were totally barred from the affairs of legislation and state administration and were given only a few sham political rights. They were utterly deprived of any opportunity to seek higher qualifications, or only one in a thousand was allowed to take some university degree.

Another argument of the imperialists against the early granting of independence was that those countries were still unable to stand on their economic feet, because they either did not have the necessary financial means or were economically undeveloped.

The latter two allegations are to the point. How, indeed, could they have the necessary financial means when over long centuries the colonialists had pillaged them, and how could their economies have developed when the colonialists had done all in their power to hinder such economic development. They stole their material resources or bought them up for export, and they forcibly retarded industrial development in order to create new markets for the industries of the metropolitan countries. Those colonial territories are poor and economically undeveloped because the colonialists have reduced them to poverty and backwardness. For poverty and backwardness to disappear, those people must first rid themselves of their exploiters and then be given aid by the economically advanced countries.

The United Nations, which should have been called to promote the speedy liquidation of the colonial system, did not properly fulfil this historic task. The main reason for this was that, for long years following World War II, the large majority of the United Nations consisted of capitalist states economically dependent upon and politically influenced by the imperialist colonial powers, especially the United States of America, and that the United Nations apparatus was headed by Secretaries-General (TRYGVE LIE, DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD) who were servile tools of the great imperialist powers. The result was that for one and a half decades the United Nations functioned almost exclusively as an obedient voting machine of U.S. imperialism.

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The replacement of the mandate system with the trusteeship system doubtless signified an important step ahead. The fact that the Charter of the United Nations ensured in advance the right to independence for nine African colonies (former possessions of four imperialist powers — Great Britain, France, Belgium and Italy) did not only mean that the liberation of those nine countries was only a matter of time. International recognition of the right to independence of nine African colonies implied recognition of the right to independence of all the other dependent territories in Africa. The nine countries concerned did not belong, either economically or politically, among the most developed of the African colonies. It was all along clear to every thinking man that, for example in West Africa, to grant independence to Togoland and the Cameroons was impossible if at the same time the Gold Coast and Nigeria were to remain in colonial subjection. The United Nations Organization itself was also aware of this contradiction, so it required the colonial powers to present annual reports on the non-self-governing territories under their administration, and that is why it encouraged them to place their colonies under the UN trusteeship system supervised by the Trusteeship Council.

The trusteeship system, however, had a fundamental deficiency: it left the administration of trust territories in the hands of those colonial powers which, under the mandate system of the League of Nations, as mandatory states had been absolute masters of the same territories. As a result, the annual reports on the trust territories (just like those which the colonial powers prepared on the situation in the non-self-governing territories they were administering) showed not the real situation but a picture falsified for the sake of the colonialists.

UN Visiting Missions (fact-finding committees) were sent to the trust territories from time to time, and since in their majority they were also composed of representa-



tives of capitalist countries, in their reports they perforce had regard for the interests of the colonial imperialists.

That was how it happened that colonial countries in Black Africa started to accede to independence only in the second post-war decade, and even then only at a slow pace (Sudan in 1956, Ghana in 1957, Guinea in 1958). Most of them won independence only during the nineteen-sixties, and many of them (South Africa which is the richest of all, Southern Rhodesia, five Portuguese colonies, Spanish Río de Oro, and French Somaliland) even crossed the threshold of the seventies in colonial status. As far as the trust territories are concerned, it took fifteen years for the first trust (ex-mandated) territory to be liberated (Cameroons), and an additional two years and a half elapsed before the rest attained independence; moreover, there is still a former mandated territory (trust territory by the terms of the UN Charter). South West Africa, which continues to be kept in colonial subjection.

As is seen, neither the UN trusteeship system nor UN preoccupation with matters of the non-self-governing territories could fulfil the purposes of the Charter. Yet there is a certain useful aspect to both of them. Namely, in connection with the reports of the administering powers, and during the discussion of the several colonial questions in the UN General Assembly and in its Committees, representatives of the peoples of trust territories and other dependent countries were and are in a position to submit their complaints, problems and proposals to the United Nations and thus to world public opinion; and also representatives of former colonial countries, which had already attained independence, and those of the socialist countries had and have occasion to denounce the situation in trust territories and other colonies and the damage being done to them by the colonial imperialists.

During the sixties, with the admission of a large number of former colonial countries and with U THANT's taking office as Secretary-General, the United Nations underwent a fortunate transformation. Today the anti-imperialist states (Afro-Asian countries, some countries of Latin America, and the socialist states) already wield the absolute majority in the world organization.

The influence of the great imperialist powers and all-powerful U.S. pressure have diminished. In spite of this the United Nations is still not what it should be in accordance with its Charter, because there is no unity in the camp of the Asian and African ex-colonial countries. In Africa just as in Asia there are nations whose leaders are under imperialist influence and even support the imperialists in many questions discussed in the United Nations. This is one of several factors owing to which the liberation of the peoples fighting for independence against the colonialists is still being delayed.

The imperialist powers still today put pressure upon the young independent countries of Black Africa. These African states have not yet won complete independence. Imperialism has not yet been ousted from Africa. The imperialists have lost most of their colonial possessions, and their influence and prestige have diminished, but they have kept the key economic positions. The political independence achieved by the African peoples is of no full value without economic independence.

The principal and most urgent task of the young states in Black Africa is to achieve economic independence. Therefore the struggle is not ended with the attainment of independent statehood: it still goes on but is waged by different methods.

Accession to independence has opened up a new historic period in the life of Africa. And those countries of Africa which have not yet crossed this boundary untiringly continue waging their struggle for independence.

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#### MOVEMENTS OF AFRICAN UNITY

Along with the upsurge of African freedom movements the post-war years witnessed the gradual spread of the idea of unity among the African peoples and the start of efforts aimed at achieving the unity of Africa, of the African peoples.

The idea of African unity was not born after the war. The predecessor of the movements of African unity, Pan-Africanism, actually started in the years around the turn of the century as a movement uniting the peoples of Africa and the ethnic



groups of African descent living in other parts of the world, especially the Negroes of America and the West Indies. Its originator was the Trinidad Negro politician HENRY SYLVESTER-WILLIAMS. In 1898 he founded in London the African Association in protest against the British imperialists' bloody colonial war on the Matabele tribe of Southern Africa. In 1900 this organization convened a Pan-African conference in London, where it was decided that the Association would form local branches in countries with Negro populations and convene Pan-African conferences periodically.

This plan was not carried out at the time, but the idea was kept alive, and in 1919 in Paris, during the sitting of the peace conferences following World War I, the First Pan-African Congress assembled at the initiative of the distinguished American Negro scholar and writer Dr. BURGHARDT W. DUBOIS. The Congress was presided over by the Senegalese Negro BLAISE DIAGNE, but there were only 12 Africans (from 9 African countries) among the 57 participants, the majority were American Negroes. In its resolution the Congress demanded an end to the atrocities perpetrated in African countries by the colonial authorities and to the complete dispossession of Africans, as well as to racial discrimination and oppression applied against black people all over the world.

But the Congress resolution made mention neither of a struggle to be waged for independence nor of radical changes to be made in the colonial regime of European imperialists.

The Second Pan-African Congress held in August–September 1921 in London, Brussels and Paris was attended by 113 delegates, among them 41 from Africa. That Second Congress also adopted a moderate language. DIAGNE, who again had a leading part in the convention, even said in his speech: "Our Congress sets itself only cultural and informative tasks, which we can fulfill only with the effective help of civilized nations."

The Third and Fourth Pan-African Congresses, which took place in London in 1923 and in New York in 1927 respectively, were practically gatherings of American Negroes without Africans (who were represented by a few African students residing in the United States).

It was planned to hold the fifth Pan-African Congress in 1929 on African soil (in Tunis), but the plan came to nothing.

The Fifth Pan-African Congress eventually met in London only after World War II, in September 1945. In that Congress, where for the first time the majority of the delegates came from Africa, an active leading role was played — besides the old leaders of the movement (Dr. DUBOIS, G. PADMORE) — by outstanding figures of the African peoples' anti-imperialist struggle for independence like KWAME NKRUMAH, JOMO KENYATTA, and PETER ABRAHAMS. The Congress adopted a document submitted by NKRUMAH, the "Declaration to the Colonial People", which appealed to the intellectuals, workers and peasants of Africa and formulated the programme of the movement briefly as follows:

"All colonies must be free from foreign imperialist control, whether political or economic. The peoples of the colonies must have the right to elect their own governments, without restrictions from foreign powers. We say to the peoples of the colonies that they must fight for these ends by all means at their disposal... Colonial and subject peoples of the world, Unite!"

The aims set by the Fifth Pan-African Congress met with understanding and response in Africa. The most conscious political leaders of the subjugated African peoples identified themselves with the programme formulated by the Congress,

which thereby greatly contributed to the spread of independence movements. The organization and development of these very movements took so much of the attention and energy of freedom fighters in all countries that the first ten years following World War II (1945–1955) saw no substantive progress toward African unity. Steps were taken to unite in an interterritorial centre the political parties of several countries (French colonies),<sup>1</sup> and to establish trade-union centres uniting the unions of several countries, but nothing was done until 1955 to launch a united movement co-ordinating the struggle for unity of African peoples.

The movement of African unity really gathered momentum in the second half of the 1950's, as a consequence of the Bandung Conference and the appearance of the first young independent African states.

The first historically significant great convention of representatives of Asian and African countries took place in Bandung from April 18 to 24, 1955, with the participation of six African countries, four from Black Africa (the two old independent states: Ethiopia and Liberia; plus two countries on the eve of independence: the Sudan and the Gold Coast) and two Arab African countries: Egypt and Libya. The conference stood up for the right of peoples to self-determination, demanded the elimination of racial discrimination and segregation, and adopted a "Declaration of Promotion of World Peace and Co-operation", which had been drawn up by the People's Republic of China and the Republic of India a year before, laying down the famous Bandung principles:

Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity; mutual non-aggression; non-interference in internal affairs of other countries; recognition of equality and mutual interests; peaceful coexistence.

The Declaration called upon all countries of the world to promote peaceful coexistence, friendly co-operation, general disarmament, the total prohibition of nuclear weapons, and the peaceful settlement of international disputes.

The Bandung conference was instrumental in the rapid upsurge of the independence movements of subject peoples in Black Africa. Moreover, three countries of Black Africa acceded to independence in the next few years: the Sudan in 1956, the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1957, and Guinea in 1958.

It was in the spirit of the Bandung conference that delegates from 45 countries met in the First Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference at Cairo from December 16, 1957, to January 1, 1958. Black Africa was represented by two independent states (Ethiopia and the Sudan) and three territories still fighting for independence (Senegal, Cameroons, Zanzibar).

The conference adopted a declaration stressing adherence to the five Bandung principles of peaceful coexistence, which in the view of the participants should be the foundations of all manner of international relations.

The conference condemned imperialism in all its forms, the aggressive military blocs and pacts, and demanded the withdrawal of foreign troops from Asia and Africa and the dismantling of military bases. It demanded independence for all colonies, protectorates and other dependent territories, took a stand in favour of support to the independence struggle of Afro-Asian countries against the colonialists, and censured France's colonial war on the Algerian people and Israel's policy of aggression.

A separate resolution condemned the policy of racial discrimination in all forms. A resolution was adopted on disarmament and the thwarting of the threat of nuclear war, and an appeal was made to the governments of the United States and

<sup>1</sup> See the chapters on the French colonies below.



the United Kingdom, as well as to the scientists of the world, requesting the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the destruction of the existing stockpiles. Another appeal to the United Nations demanded that the Asian-African countries might participate in the various UN organs on an equal footing with other countries, and insisted on the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China and the immediate admission of the Mongolian People's Republic to membership in the United Nations.

The conference adopted a resolution on the promotion of industrial, agricultural, social and cultural development in Asian-African countries as well as on their co-operation in the economic, technical and cultural fields. Finally, the conference decided to set up the Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Council as a permanent body with headquarters in Cairo.

The most ardent proponent and advocate of the movement of African unity was KWAME NKRUMAH. It was on his initiative that Accra in April 1958 was host to representatives of Black Africa's four independent states (Ghana, Sudan, Ethiopia, Liberia) and of the four independent Arab African countries of the time (United Arab Republic, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya). After several days of deliberations they reached an agreed stand on the problems of African countries and major questions of international politics. They stated that the principal task of African peoples was to fight against imperialism and colonialism, and that the independent African states had the responsibility to safeguard their hard-won independence, their sovereignty and territorial integrity, and to co-operate with all peace-loving countries for the sake of world peace and international security.

They declared their solidarity with all subject peoples of Africa and their readiness to maintain friendly relations with all countries of the world.

It was again on NKRUMAH's initiative that the First Conference of African States was held at Accra in December 1958. Delegates from 27 countries attended the conference. Although different political views and ideologies clashed during the deliberations, the agents of the imperialists, however hard they tried, failed to prevent the conference from coming to a successful conclusion. Despite the existing differences of opinion, the conference managed to adopt unanimous resolutions on the most important issues. In a resolution the conference emphatically condemned imperialism and colonialism, and called upon the African peoples to close their ranks in a fight against them. In another resolution it invited the independent African states not to enter into diplomatic relations with countries where racial discrimination was applied against Africans. In a third resolution it was stated that the common ultimate aim of the African nations was to create a Union of African States.

The year 1960 removed another barrier from the road of African progress: a number of countries of colonial Africa were on the threshold of independence. This enormous and awaited change in the life of Africa was accompanied by the upsurge of the unity movements. Prior to the birth of new independent states, still in the first half of 1960, three conferences on African unity took place.

From January 23 to 31, 1960, representatives of 30 countries assembled in the Second Conference of African Peoples at Tunis. Besides adopting a number of resolutions on its support of the freedom struggle of the Algerian people, the conference appealed to African states to boycott the products of the racist Union of South Africa, etc. In view of the forthcoming birth of several new independent African states, the conference was preoccupied chiefly with economic problems of the new African states. It recommended African countries, in the interest of their economic

advancement, to make maximum use of their internal resources, to develop trade among them and economic co-operation in general, to lower continually the customs barriers between African countries, to organize an African common market, etc. And finally, with a view to consolidating African unity, it proposed the establishment of a Pan-African Federation of trade unions.

The Second Afro-Asian Peoples' Solidarity Conference was held, with the participation of 350 delegates from 58 countries, in Conakry from 11 to 15 April, 1960. In its resolutions the conference insisted on the right to complete independence of Asian and African peoples, and called upon all states and peoples of Asia and Africa to fight against colonialist and imperialist intrigues, for the complete liberation of both continents; it took a stand in favour of general disarmament and peaceful coexistence; it demanded the prohibition of nuclear weapons, and an end to the persecution of those fighting for national independence. The conference dealt with the economic, social and cultural problems of Asian and African countries, it stood up for the nationalization of foreign banks, insurance companies and major industries, for the expansion of the public sector of the economy and the introduction of economic planning. It adopted a declaration on the determined struggle of the Asian-African peoples against imperialism and colonialism, against the aggressive military blocs and their supporters. Finally, the conference approved of the statute of a solidarity organization of Afro-Asian peoples.

From June 14 to 24, 1960, the Second Conference of Independent African States was held in Addis Ababa. It was also attended by representatives of four independent states of Black Africa and four Arab African states. (Of the participants of the first conference held in 1958, the Sudan was absent, while Guinea was represented this time.) Among those present, in addition to independent states, were representatives of the Cameroons, Nigeria, Somalia and the Congo on the eve of independence. Also this conference discussed the main problems of national liberation movements and adopted resolutions on related issues. It was decided to hold the Third Conference at Tunis in 1962.

The second half of 1960 saw an additional 16 countries of Black Africa accede to independence. This fact opened up new avenues before the aspirations for African unity and prompted the African peoples to further action. Various groups of the young independent states made an attempt to establish an interregional organization of unity.

1. The first to meet for this purpose were representatives of the recently emancipated former French colonies, first at Abidjan in October 1960, then again at Brazzaville in December 1960. Both conferences dealt with the problem of unity, but this was not the principal item of the deliberations. (In October the participants decided to co-ordinate their foreign policy positions in the United Nations, and to meet periodically to discuss international problems with a view to elaborating a common stand; and in December they decided to work out a scheme of economic co-operation among their countries.) Both conferences were preoccupied with actual problems of international politics, Algeria and the Congo, and on both issues they took a stand which was contrary to African interests and favoured the interests of neocolonialism. As concerns Algeria, the October conference proposed negotiations between France and the Algerian provisional government, and in December the delegates assured DE GAULLE of their confidence and opposed the Algerian proposal for a plebiscite to be organized in Algeria under the supervision of the United Nations. In the matter of the Congo, in October they took a stand in favour of summoning a round-table conference of the Congo leaders, and in December they expressed their agreement with



the United Nations operation in the Congo, which was tantamount to endorsing the resolutions passed against the legitimate Congolese government.

2. The conferences of the former French colonies still showed visibly neocolonialist influences. On the other hand, considerable progress was made by the Casablanca conference which took place from January 3 to 7, 1961, with the participation of the governments of three independent states of Black Africa (Ghana, Guinea, Mali) and three Arab African countries (United Arab Republic, Morocco, Algeria). Besides backing up the interests of African peoples in a number of burning questions (supporting the Algerian people's fight for independence, requesting the United Nations to restore the legitimate rights of the central government of the Congo, demanding a halt to direct and indirect aggression against the Congo, an end to France's nuclear weapons tests in the Sahara, etc.), the conference took a significant step toward the unity of African peoples by adopting a document on the principles of African unity and the programme of action of African countries in the struggle for political and economic independence.

The signatories to that document (called the "Casablanca Charter") undertook: —

to do their utmost to rid their countries definitively of the political influence and economic pressure of the imperialists, to utilize the natural resources of their countries for the benefit of their own peoples;

to continue fighting for the liquidation of all forms of colonialism and neocolonialism in their countries, for the withdrawal of the foreign armed forces stationed there and the dismantling of foreign military bases;

to preserve neutrality in foreign politics and not to join any military bloc;

to give all assistance to the African territories still under foreign rule in their struggle for independence.

The members of the Casablanca group invited all independent African states to join the organization of the Charter with a view to safeguarding the unity and security of the African countries, and they outlined the structural set-up of that organization.

The Charter proposed the establishment of a consultative body of representatives of the African countries, and set up four committees: (1) a political committee composed of the heads of state of African countries (or their representatives), which should have the duty to co-ordinate their policies and elaborate their common policy decisions; (2) an economic committee composed of the Economics Ministers of the African states, which should be called to promote the economic co-operation of African countries; (3) a cultural committee, and (4) a joint African high military command composed of the Chiefs of Staff of independent African states.

And finally, to secure the effective co-ordination of the work of these committees, it was envisaged to set up a bureau of co-ordination.

3. In May 1961 the governments of Liberia and Nigeria called a conference of independent states of Africa. The conference, which took place at Monrovia from May 8 to 12, was attended by representatives of 20 independent African states: the 12 former French colonies that had taken part in the Brazzaville conference of December 1960, further Nigeria, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Togo, Somalia, Ethiopia and two Arab states, Tunisia and Libya. (The states of the Casablanca group and the Sudan rejected the invitation.)

Some of the promoters of the Monrovia conference, obviously at a suggestion from the imperialist agents behind them, called this conference, in order to counteract the initiative of the Casablanca group which they found too radical, with the purpose of rallying the African countries, as soon as possible, in an organization of unity more

to the liking of the neocolonialists opposed to the Casablanca group. Their plan, however, proved to be only a part success. The majority of the participants, who worried about the same problems as the Casablanca group, could not be diverted from discussing those issues. Thus it happened that the Monrovia conference dealt with practically the same questions as the Casablanca conference, and passed resolutions of almost identical purport. Those who speculated for the splitting of the African countries into two camps managed to "achieve" only that the resolutions of the Monrovia conference, regarding most of the major questions, reflected an attitude identical with that displayed at Casablanca, though they were kept in a more moderate, less radical, tone. A resolution was adopted on the promotion of mutual understanding and co-operation with a view to achieving unity between the African countries and the Malagasy Republic, stressing the equality of African states, demanding respect for their sovereignty, and condemning any interference in one another's internal affairs just as any subversion from outside. In the resolution on the threat to the peace and security of Africa and the whole world the participants took a stand in favour of the prohibition of the production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons and the cessation of nuclear tests, undertook to support the independence struggle of the colonial peoples (notably the peoples of Algeria and Angola), condemned the policy of apartheid of the racist government of South Africa, and called the African countries to an economic boycott of the Republic of South Africa. A separate resolution recommended that the disputes or conflicts that might arise between African countries be settled by means of peaceful negotiations.

The plan of the Monrovia promoters to form a new organization of unity opposed to that of Casablanca failed for the time being. The conference decided to meet again at Lagos in 1962.

From March 26 to 28, 1961, the twelve former French colonies held another conference at Yaoundé, where they decided to form the "African and Malagasy Union" as an interregional political organization of the twelve independent states.<sup>1</sup> The conference approved also the draft treaty on the establishment of an organization of economic co-operation of the twelve countries, as well as the principles to govern the negotiations to be conducted by the organization with the European Economic Community, and left it to members of the Union to work out the draft agreements to be concluded on their juridical, diplomatic and other relationships.

Thus, the division of the independent African states into two camps became a fact. The formation of the African and Malagasy Union as opposed to the militant anti-imperialist Casablanca group suited the plans of the neocolonialists. This was clearly manifested in the resolution by which the conference assured the Congo separatists of its understanding and promised them direct armed support.

The majority of the African peoples, however, did not agree with this policy courting the favour of neocolonialists. Political parties, social organizations and trade unions of 32 (either independent or still subject) African countries, sympathizing with the antimilitarist policy of the Casablanca group, sent representatives to the Third Conference of African Peoples, which took place in Cairo from March 25 to 30, 1961, simultaneously with the twelve-nation conference at Yaoundé. The Cairo conference bore witness to a decisive change in the thinking of African freedom fighters. The majority of the participants in the First (Accra, December 1958) and Second

<sup>1</sup> Two former French colonies, Guinea and Mali, as members of the Casablanca group, did not take part, and Mauritania was not yet independent at the time.



(Tunis, January 1960) Conferences of African Peoples had not yet understood the essence of the policy of neocolonialism. They spoke against imperialism and colonialism but gave credit to the misleading propaganda of the colonialists who pretended to agree to the progressive liquidation of the colonial system. The recent developments, however, the Congo bloodshed and the dirty war against the Algerian people, had convinced them that the compliance of the imperialists was only a trick, that in fact they endeavoured to maintain their political and economic positions behind the sham independence of the former colonial countries.

The Third Conference of African Peoples (Cairo, March 1961), while discussing the topical problems of the subjugated peoples' struggle for independence and against imperialism, devoted its attention chiefly to the dangers of neocolonialism, to the new ways and means resorted to by the colonial imperialists to preserve and strengthen their political influence and economic positions in Africa. It called a spade a spade not only when speaking of neocolonialism, but also when the case in point was about those imperialist powers whose neocolonialist policies threatened all African countries — powers like Great Britain, France, West Germany, Belgium, Holland, Spain and Portugal, as well as Israel and South Africa, and most of all the United States of America. The conference invited the African countries to combat the dangers of neocolonialism and pointed the way of thwarting them. The conference stated that the principal weapon against neocolonialism was the unity of African countries, and in its resolution on African unity and solidarity it stood up for the restoration and strengthening of African unity which had been disrupted by the division of Africa into regional groups.

In the course of 1961 and 1962 the Casablanca group made attempts to restore the unity of African countries. Besides it continued its untiring activities — by establishing numerous institutions and preparing various plans — in the interest of the economic and cultural advancement of all African countries.

The cultural committee of the Casablanca group in its meetings held in July–August 1961 and March 1962 drafted and adopted an agreement and a programme for scientific and technical co-operation among member states, the establishment of an African scientific research institute, etc.

Along the economic line the member countries of the Casablanca group in March 1962 concluded an agreement for the establishment of an African Common Market, open for accession by any African state, decided to found an African Development Bank, formulated plans for an African financial convention, an African air transport agreement, etc.

The political committee of the Casablanca group at its session held in Cairo in June 1962 practically drafted a political constitution of the organization: it stated that member countries agreed to co-operation in foreign politics, in the economic, cultural and military fields, that they were determined to fight against neocolonialism and to support the efforts made to realize disarmament and the prohibition of nuclear weapons. In these resolutions the member countries took a stand in favour of support to the freedom struggle of African peoples (Congo, South Africa, Portuguese colonies, Algeria, etc.), and with a view to restoring African unity they declared their readiness for a rapprochement with the Monrovia group and proposed the convocation of a single all-African conference.

In the meantime the former French colonies and the Monrovia group also followed their own respective lines.

The African and Malagasy Union held a new conference at Tananarive from September 6 to 12, 1961. The parties signed a Charter laying down that the Union's

main task was to implement their co-operation in foreign politics. They signed also a joint defence pact which, on the one hand, imposed on members the obligation of mutual assistance in case of a threat to the security of any member or in case of outside attack or internal subversion and, on the other hand, made it possible for the country concerned in such cases to appeal to France for help. Also they formed the African and Malagasy Organization of Economic Co-operation. In view of world public opinion, they felt compelled to state in the resolutions that they favoured general disarmament with controls and that they condemned the policies of the South African racists and the Portuguese colonialists, but on such burning issues concerning African peoples as the questions of Algeria and the Congo they adopted a position similar to that of the great imperialist powers.

The Monrovia group held its next conference at Lagos from January 25 to 30, 1962. Invitations had been sent to all independent African states, but the Casablanca group members and the Sudan again refused to attend because representatives of the Algerian government had not been invited. Twenty African states were represented: the 13 former French colonies which formed the African and Malagasy Union, as well as the Congo, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Tanganyika and Ethiopia. These latter had decided to join the African and Malagasy Union, and then the conference set up the permanent organs of the Union. It appointed a standing committee of ministers of the member countries to handle the affairs of co-operation in financial and economic fields among them and with the European Economic Community, further it established a health and labour agency, a cultural and educational council, etc. The conference took a position in favour of independence for all colonial countries at an early date, confirmed the Monrovia resolution on the question of disarmament, condemned the apartheid policies of the government of South Africa, and pledged support to the Angolan freedom fighters. In a separate resolution it demanded a modification of the UN Charter to secure the appropriate and equitable representation of African countries in the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations.

Both regional organizations of African states had been formed with a view to uniting all African countries. This aim was frustrated by political and ideological differences. On the questions of the greatest concern to Africans, however, both organizations endorsed the same programme: their main goal was to promote the total disappearance of the colonial system, to achieve independence for all African countries, to consolidate the young independent African states, and to further their economic and cultural progress. Owing to their political and ideological differences they evaluated differently the role of the great imperialist powers and held different opinions regarding the ways and means and the tactics to be employed in the struggle for those objectives.

In the years 1960 to 1962 the cause of independence for Africa made considerable progress. The number of independent African countries<sup>1</sup> had risen to 25 by the end of 1960, to 28 by 1961, and to 32 by 1962. Based on their experience in the United Nations, the leaders of the 32 African states came to see that the best way of promoting the success of their basic aim — African independence, economic growth and cultural progress — was, despite their differences in minor details, for all of them to join forces and unite in an all-African organization of unity.

<sup>1</sup> Exclusive of the Union (Republic) of South Africa, which I regard as a colony held in total subjection and not as an independent state. — E.S.



The idea was carried into effect by the conference of heads of state and government of 30 African countries<sup>1</sup> held in Addis Ababa from May 23 to 25, 1963. The conference declared the formation of the Organization of African Unity comprising all the independent countries of the African continent. The conference adopted the Charter of the Organization, defining its purposes and principles, drawing up its statute and providing for its organizational structure.

The birth of the Organization of African Unity heralded the victory of the African aspirations for unity and thus the failure of the disruptive attempts of the imperialists. The colonialists had cherished the hope that, by taking advantage of the differences between the Casablanca group and the African and Malagasy Union, they could weaken both African camps and thus promote their neocolonialist aims. With the establishment of the Organization of African Unity, however, both the Casablanca group and the African and Malagasy Union attained their primary goal: co-operation in the most important issues among all African countries, regardless of their existing differences. Both regional associations merged in the new all-African organization so that, by reconciling their differences within the framework of the organization of unity, they could join forces to continue their struggle for the common goals.

The Organization of African Unity is an association of independent states. Its history is part of the current period of African history, of the history of independent African states. In this work we have dealt with the African aspirations for unity solely from the point of view of the independence movements of the African nations fighting for freedom.

This fight to achieve independence is still going on in a number of African territories, and one of the main preoccupations of the Organization of African Unity is just to promote the triumph of the liberation movements. The history of these movements and the assistance provided to them by the Organization of African Unity up to the end of 1970 are discussed within the scope of the present work (in Volume IV). However, the Organization of African Unity is not one of the countries of colonial Africa (whose road to independence and the simultaneous disintegration of colonial empires are dealt with in the present work), but an organization of the young independent states of the Africa which is free for the most part and whose history accordingly forms part of the history of those particular states.

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<sup>1</sup> Morocco was represented by observers, and Togo was absent but joined the organization later.

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## BRITISH WEST AFRICA

British West Africa played a leading role in the post-war history of colonial Black Africa. The two most important West African colonies, the Gold Coast and Nigeria, were among the first to win independence, and the road they traversed was viewed as an example to be followed by all the other African territories still in colonial subjection.

The countries of West Africa were qualified for this role by their historical background (the system of indirect rule, the absence of European land-owning settlers, independent peasant farms, the relative development of commodity production, the fairly numerous African national bourgeoisie, planters and merchants, and intellectuals).

That is why it was in West Africa (first of all in the Gold Coast) that the British imperialists were compelled to shift policies immediately after the war. This can be attributed to a number of causes, the most important of which were:

1. active African participation in the war;
2. the influence of the adjoining French colonies;
3. the war-time growth of the African national bourgeoisie;
4. the stimulating effect of the administrative reforms introduced during the war, and
5. as a result of all this, the strengthening of the national movements.

Under the pressure of these factors the British imperialists recognized in principle the right to independence of the West African colonies and introduced new reforms under the slogan of "preparation for independence".

Their tactics was aimed first of all at delaying independence as long as possible. For this end, as well as in order to place their own men in leading positions they fomented and exploited the conflicts between the "Colony" and the "Protectorate" (in fact between progressive forces and reactionary feudal elements) and the tribal differences. At the same time they freely resorted to terrorizing and eliminating the reluctant leaders of national movements, or cajoling them. This policy was successful in only two small countries of West Africa (Sierra Leone, Gambia); it fell through in the Gold Coast (and Togoland) and was a half-success in Nigeria (and the Cameroons).

The post-war history of British West Africa is characterized by increasingly rapid political development.

The rate of development, however, is found to have been different in the particular countries in spite of their common background. In contrast with the Gold Coast and Nigeria, which are richer in natural resources and more economically advanced, Sierra Leone and the Gambia are poor, almost exclusively agrarian, countries.



Nigeria and the Gold Coast are inhabited by peoples having a great historical past; in Nigeria even feudal-based Moslem state formations exist, while the population of Sierra Leone and the Gambia consists of a variety of small and primitive tribes. The differences are great also as regards the rise of the national bourgeoisie and African intelligentsia. In the Gold Coast and Nigeria the new-type political parties grew at a quick pace and were soon to play a decisive part in the moulding of the political life of their respective countries, while in Sierra Leone and the Gambia the liberation movements changed only slowly to broad-based political movements of the people.

These differences were responsible for the difference of the several countries as to the progress and results of the struggle for independence. The Gold Coast won independence as early as 1957, Nigeria in 1960, Sierra Leone in 1961, and the Gambia as late as 1966. Even the character and the degree of independence are different in every country. Accession to independence in the Gold Coast brought with it the coming to power of the anti-imperialist NKRUMAH government, opening thereby the prospect of complete independence; Nigeria, on the other hand, when becoming independent, with its internal division and multiparty system, instead of consistently fighting for complete independence, was still for a long time an arena of the struggle of opposing tribes, parties and leading politicians; while Sierra Leone and the Gambia, under cover of nominal independence, came for the time being under the rule of opportunist leaders promoting the policies of the colonial imperialists.

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#### CHAPTER III

#### THE GOLD COAST

##### *The "Burns Constitution"*

In 1946 the British government introduced the "Burns Constitution", named after the then Governor of the Gold Coast, to replace the old Constitution of 1925. The main goal was to alter the composition of the Legislative Council. In contrast to the legislative body established by the 1925 Constitution, with no elected representative and only nine Africans among its twenty-nine members, the new Legislative Council, which, in addition to its President (the Governor or his deputy), consisted of thirty members, had eighteen elected African representatives (nine from what was called the Gold Coast Colony, four from Ashanti and five from the towns — Accra, Cape Coast, Sekondi, Takoradi and Kumasi). Six of the remaining twelve were ex-officio members (the Colonial Secretary of the Gold Coast, the three chief District Commissioners, the Attorney-General, the Financial Secretary), and six were nominated by the Governor.

Undoubtedly, this change was a step forward, inasmuch as it secured a majority of elected (that is, African) members. Its practical significance, however, was next to nothing for the following reasons:

1. Executive power was invariably vested in the colonial officials, who were appointed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom upon recommendation of the Governor.

2. Members of the highest organ of executive power, called the Executive Council, were not Ministers, they were not chosen from the members of the Legislative Council and were not responsible to this body, but were appointed chief officials who had authority only to give advice to the Governor, and were obliged to carry out his instructions even if the Legislative Council objected to them. (Though the Executive Council had a couple of African members, yet these were likewise responsible to the Governor and had to comply with his instructions regardless of the position adopted by the Legislative Council.)

3. The major posts at all colonial administrative organs were filled by officials delegated from England.

4. Discussion and approval, or rejection, of the budget were in theory within the power of the Legislative Council, but this power was in practice entirely illusory, because: (a) discussion of financial matters by the Legislative Council was as usual subject to the consent of the Governor; (b) the Governor was as a rule empowered, if he deemed it necessary in the interest of "public order", "public faith", or "good government", to abrogate any decision of the Legislative Council or to declare any bill or draft to be in force even when it had been rejected by the Legislative Council. (In this respect he was bound only to report on his reasons to the Foreign Secretary



and to submit to him any contrary opinions presented in writing by members of the Legislative Council.)

Considering all this and the fact that out of the eighteen "elected" members thirteen (the "territorial" members) were not representatives elected by the people, but district chieftains or their deputies, it can hardly be surprising that the overwhelming majority of the African population did not enthusiastically welcome the new Constitution.

The Gold Coasters felt that they would be able, and the time had come, to take the government of their country into their own hands. The Burns Constitution left political power in the hands of the Governor, who was forced upon them by aliens, and power functions were exercised by officials nominated by him; the people thus viewed the new document as a new cover under which old-style colonial oppression was going on.

#### *The United Gold Coast Convention. The Return of Nkrumah*

One year after the Burns Constitution had come into force, in August 1947 JOSEPH DANQUAH,<sup>1</sup> General Secretary of the Gold Coast Youth Conference, and several young intellectuals, joining forces with a few members of the Council of Chiefs, formed a political party, the United Gold Coast Convention (U.G.C.C.). The party called for struggle against the Burns Constitution,<sup>2</sup> "to ensure that by all legitimate and constitutional means the direction and control of government should pass into the hands of the people and their chiefs in the shortest possible time".<sup>3</sup>

But the founders of the new party proved unable to rise to their task: "... these men were hungry for power, they lacked the organizing abilities for translating their ambitions into reality. First they turned to the chiefs for support, but were rebuffed. . . Rejected by the chiefs and lacking confidence in the people, these intellectuals spent their time issuing flamboyant manifestoes couched in vague generalizations. The U.G.C.C. remained a paper organization until the lawyer-politicians decided to invite Dr. Nkrumah,<sup>4</sup> then a post-graduate student in London, to return to the Gold Coast to take over the secretaryship of the organization . . . the Convention did not really get down to business until the arrival of Dr. Kwame Nkrumah."<sup>5</sup>

In November 1947, at the invitation of Dr. DANQUAH, leader of the United Gold Coast Convention, NKUMAH returned to the Gold Coast and took over the post of party secretary and thus the entire leadership of the party apparatus. His outstanding organizing abilities and other personal qualities had a great part in his rapid success in building well organized branches all over the country in a short time.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 32

<sup>2</sup> A few months earlier DANQUAH still had been in favour of the Burns Constitution, and even had undertaken to serve as a member (appointed by the Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs) on the Legislative Council to be established under the Burns Constitution. He changed his mind when he came into sharp conflict with BURNS because sons and other relatives of his deceased brother, NANA OFORI ATTA, were sentenced to death or life imprisonment for their alleged participation in the assassination of ATTA.

<sup>3</sup> G. PADMORE, *The Gold Coast Revolution*, London, 1953, p. 60.

<sup>4</sup> See p. 33

<sup>5</sup> PADMORE, *op. cit.*, p. 61.

#### *The Events between January and March 1948*

The Burns Constitution caused great political discontent and indignation among broad circles of the Gold Coast population.<sup>1</sup> This political resentment, however, came only second to the economic grievances that weighed as a heavy burden on all strata of the Gold Coasters, not only on their relative minority which had already awakened to political consciousness.

First of all, the cocoa producers greatly resented the measures passed by the colonial authorities prescribing that, should the "swollen shoot" disease show on the cocoa plants, every infected tree was to be cut down and burnt immediately. The colonial government insisted that the spread of the disease threatened the cocoa production of the entire colony, and, considering that the producers were in no position to combat the contagion, this radical solution was in the public interest. The producers saw this government measure as a collusion between the big purchasing monopolies and the colonial authorities to ruin the small farmers. They might have been mistaken in this belief, though it cannot be denied that an imminent danger called for the enforcement of the radical measure. The fact remains, however, that the government, instead of trying seriously to combat the contagion on a large scale, wanted to solve the problem to the detriment of the little men, so that the cocoa producers' resentment was by no means unfounded.

Another, no less serious, economic grievance of the peoples of the Gold Coast was the inflation and the enormous rise in the prices of prime necessities. Or rather, this was the most serious trouble, for it hit not only the cocoa producers but all strata of the population. The high cocoa prices led to an abundance of money in the country, but money could buy hardly anything because of the war-time and post-war shortage of goods. The monopoly companies raised the prices of imported articles continually, and the black market flourished. The government argued that the price increase was a natural consequence of short supplies, so that decrees could not help; when there would again be plenty of goods, the prices would go down by themselves. But the Gold Coasters were not to be deceived by false arguments. They felt that the rising costs of living were due to collusion between the government and the monopoly organizations, and this time they thought so not without cause. For while there was some rise in the purchase price of cocoa, it fell far short of the rise in the prices of consumer goods. (For example, the West African Merchants' Company, pursuant to an agreement concluded with the government in 1945, that is, with the direct consent of the government, sold the imported textiles at a premium of 75 per cent above world market prices plus freight costs.)

Further complaints came from the ex-servicemen, many of whom, now returning to their country after years of loyal service in the British army, lingered in misery for lack of job opportunities.

<sup>1</sup> Spokesmen of the British government, the colonial authorities and the bourgeois press praised volubly the "enthusiasm" with which the Gold Coasters allegedly received the Burns Constitution. We encounter the same fiction in numerous works by British authors on the Gold Coast. The fact is that a narrow stratum of Gold Coast chiefs and politicians in the pay of the colonialists really applauded the Burns Constitution. Other politicians, however, who wanted to fight for independence, as well as the broad popular masses behind them, felt aggrieved because they saw first of all the defects of that instrument. The basic mistake the British government quarters made was that in the early post-war years they were unable to see the great political development the peoples of the Gold Coast had undergone during the war. What they interpreted as Gold Coast "public opinion" was the view held by a few hundred servile people who were pleased with anything their colonial masters did.



The Joint Provincial Council of Chiefs in December 1946 carried on talks with the Chamber of Commerce, with representatives of the government participating. The chiefs complained about the high prices, the black market, and demanded price regulations. Still in December the government promised the Provincial Council to introduce price controls, but it failed to keep its word. More than a year went by without any measure being taken by the government.

Things being as they were, on January 26, 1948, the population of the "Colony", led by Chief NII KWABENA BONNE III of Accra, started boycotting the European products. The boycott spread as wildfire throughout the country.

The situation became so critical that the government felt compelled to intervene and force the importers to make concessions. On February 11, representatives of the government and of the Chamber of Commerce had talks with Chief BONNE and some of his associates. Agreement was reached on reducing from 75 to 50 per cent the maximum premium on imported textile goods. Thereupon the boycott was stopped.

However, the people were unsatisfied with the result, which was for the time being nothing but a promise. A few days after the boycott had been stopped, representatives of the Ex-Servicemen's Union requested permission to hold a public rally in Accra and to march to the Government House to protest at their hardships. The request for the mass demonstration to be staged in front of the Government House was rejected, but permission was granted to the Union to send a petition to the Governor and, if it wanted also to appeal to public opinion, to hold a rally and march through the streets of Accra — on a determined route more than a mile away from the Governor's residence. The leaders of the movement accepted the conditions and presented their petition.

On February 28, the Union organized its rally, and then the demonstration started. The ex-soldiers were joined by a multitude of people who either knew nothing about the agreement on the route prescribed for the procession or did not feel bound by it and proceeded towards the Government House. A few hundred yards from the site the march was halted by police under the command of a British officer, who ordered the crowd to break up, but the people were unwilling to disperse. The officer first tried to enforce his order by the use of tear gas, and when this proved ineffective, gave order to fire, killing two Africans and wounding five. Then the march stopped, but the crowd did not scatter. An hour later the troops were sent out in reinforcement, and the demonstrators withdrew but, instead of dispersing, proceeded to the town where they looted and burned a few European (and Syrian) shops and occupied the central jail and freed the prisoners.

The following day similar demonstrations and riots occurred in Kumasi, Koforidua and other towns.

The government, and also the WATSON Commission which had been appointed to inquire into the events (to these we shall come back later), tried to make it appear as if the authorities had intervened unintentionally and had let the demonstrators give vent to their rage, deciding it was better to let material goods perish instead of human lives. But the facts tell differently: as a result of the "riots" 29 people were killed and 237 wounded.

The U.G.C.C. leaders, who had had nothing to do with the boycott movement of January-February, nor with the action of the war veterans and the ensuing riots, drew the lessons of the events and in the first days of March sent a telegram to Labour Colonial Secretary A. CREECH JONES. In their message they stated that the responsibility for the events rested entirely on the colonial authorities which had ordered

out the police and troops whose armed intervention had provoked the riots; they pointed to the failure of the colonial government and demanded that a Constituent Assembly be convened and a provisional government be formed of leaders of the Gold Coast peoples. Britain's Labour government, although being properly apprised of the happenings, did not miss the chance of disrupting the U.G.C.C. movement which it judged too dangerous. On March 18, 1948, NKRUMAH and five other leaders of the party were arrested and deported to a remote village. At the same time the British government appointed a commission under AIKEN WATSON to investigate into the riots and their causes.

The U.G.C.C. leaders spent six weeks in jail. They were released upon the arrival of the WATSON Commission in Accra towards the end of April.

### *The Watson Report*

In its report published early in June the Commission stated that the authorities had been fully justified in their action during the riots, but it severely criticized the colonial government of the Gold Coast and listed in sixteen points the grievances which, in its opinion, might have been the causes of the popular discontent and of the ensuing riots. In addition to the three principal complaints already mentioned above (cocoa crisis, high costs of living, the ex-servicemen's condition), it referred to the inadequacy of the Burns Constitution, the concentration of key economic positions in the hands of Europeans (and Syrians), the overcentralization of cocoa crop purchases, the excessive favour granted by the government to chiefs to the detriment of the detribalized, Europeanized strata of the population, the failure to keep the promises made to Africanize the civil service, etc.

To remedy the situation, the Commission recommended concrete measures, but the main conclusion it drew was that a radical transformation was needed in the organizational set-up of the local authorities, that is, a new statute was needed to replace the 1946 Constitution.

The government agreed with the WATSON report in the point where it approved of the conduct of the authorities of the Gold Coast Colony, and it accepted the recommendation for the drafting of a new Constitution. At the same time it categorically rejected the most progressive point suggesting the introduction of administrative reforms which would have required that the traditional Councils of Chiefs of the three provinces (the "Colony", Ashanti, and the Northern Territories) be superseded by democratically elected councils independent of the chiefs, and that the traditional "native authorities" in the rural districts be also completed with elected members.

### *Conflicts in the U.G.C.C. Nkrumah's Activity*

The leaders of the party, with DANQUAH at their head, though they themselves had summoned home NKRUMAH and offered him the post of party secretary, did not trust his organizing activity and revolutionary propaganda. When the party leaders were arrested and deported in connection with the 1948 riots, and were then heard by the WATSON Commission, they tried to hold NKRUMAH responsible for everything they were accused of, and after returning from deportation they deposed him from his party function. But NKRUMAH continued his feverish activity, also thereby incurring the wrath of the party leaders.



A contributing factor of the sharpening of differences between NKRUMAH and other U.G.C.C. leaders was that NKRUMAH organized the youth movement, established new schools ("national colleges") and founded the *Accra Evening News*.

The refusal of the colonial administration to meet the demands of the people, and the inefficiency of the opportunist party leaders, had a revolutionizing effect mostly, and first of all, upon the young people. To unite the militant elements of the youth, NKRUMAH founded a student organization, the Youth Study Group, which later merged with the Ashanti Youth Association and the Ghana Youth Association of Sekondi to form the Committee on Youth Organizations under the presidency of KOMLA GBEDEMAH,<sup>1</sup> a political organization which, in contrast to DANQUAH's moderate policy ("self-government within the shortest possible time"), adopted NKRUMAH's revolutionary slogan ("self-government now").

When in April 1948 NKRUMAH returned from deportation, parents of students who had been expelled from school because of their strike of protest against the arrest of party leaders called and asked him to help their children to continue studying. NKRUMAH submitted their request to the party leaders and, getting no support from them, he himself founded a school called Ghana National College. By the end of the first year the college had 230 students, and over one thousand more had applied for admission. Encouraged by the success of Ghana National College, NKRUMAH later founded a number of similar colleges, or secondary schools, in various towns of the country.

As General Secretary of the party, NKRUMAH had emphasized from the outset that the party needed a political newspaper of its own, and since other party leaders did not espouse his idea, he carried out his plan, without their help, amidst great difficulties. The first issue of the paper he founded, *Accra Evening News*, came out the very day (September 3, 1948) he was deposed as General Secretary of the party. The paper, whose editorship he entrusted to KOJO BORSIO,<sup>2</sup> soon acquired great popularity. Encouraged by this success, NKRUMAH later (in 1949, after the formation of the C.P.P.) founded the *Morning Telegraph* at Sekondi and the *Daily Mail* at Cape Coast.

To counteract the success of the *Accra Evening News*, DANQUAH and his followers launched the weekly paper *Ghana Statesman*, but it was not a long-lived venture. After it had gone out of existence, they made a few new experiments (*National Times*, *Talking Drums*) but these met the same fate soon. Later DANQUAH won a "libel suit" against the *Accra Evening News*; the paper was sentenced to a fine.

<sup>1</sup> KOMLA AGBELI GBEDEMAH was born the son of Ewe parents at Warri in Nigeria in 1912 (his father was a medical worker of the colonial administration). He went to school at missions in Nigeria and continued his studies at Gold Coast colleges. Being unable to take his degree in medicine, he started business as a candy manufacturer. From 1939 till 1943 he taught in an Accra school, and later again engaged in business (as a timber contractor and transport agent). Upon NKRUMAH's return in 1947, he went into politics and joined the U.G.C.C. In 1948, giving up business, he took over the publishing office of the *Accra Evening News*.

<sup>2</sup> KOJO BORSIO was born in 1916 in the Fanti tribe at Winneba (his father was an official of the colonial administration). He went to various Gold Coast schools, then to the Fourah Bay College of Sierra Leone, and finished his studies at Oxford and London, where he won a master's degree in geography and taught in a London secondary school. In 1946 he took an active part in the West African Students' Union in London and (together with NKRUMAH) in the work of the West African National Secretariat. In November 1947 he returned with NKRUMAH to the Gold Coast, where he became Vice-Principal of Akim-Abuakwa College at Kibi. From the day of his return he had been a member of the U.G.C.C., but first he displayed very little political activity.

DANQUAH was not satisfied with this and, being set upon preventing the publication of the paper, bought the shop where it was printed. But the C.P.P. managed to bring out the paper under a new title (*Ghana Evening News*).

*Fight of the Youth Movement against the Opportunist U.G.C.C. Leaders. Foundation of the Convention Peoples' Party*

It was not the aim of the youth movement to split the party. On the contrary, the youth leaders endeavoured, in co-operation with the party and by making way into its ranks, to give effect within the party to the consistently militant programme of the independence movement. NKRUMAH's dismissal from the post of General Secretary made it clear to them that this was impossible, that the U.G.C.C. leaders did not want, and were unable, to lead a consistent struggle for independence. So the youth leaders decided to grab the initiative under NKRUMAH's leadership.

All youth organizations of the country were called to a conference in Kumasi on December 23, 1948. The police prohibited the conference in the last minute. A great part of the delegates, however, were already in Kumasi and thus met in secret. After deliberating all night long, they worked out a manifesto entitled "Towards Self-Government" containing a new draft Constitution. They published and distributed this manifesto, and sent a copy of it to the CUSSEY Commission which was just then getting down to work.

The conference which had failed in December 1948 was held in the early days of June 1949. After three days' discussion the conference decided to propose the formation of a new political party, the Convention People's Party. It summed up the programme of the new party in the six points which follow:

- (1) To fight relentlessly by all constitutional means for the achievement of full "self-government NOW" for the chiefs and people of the Gold Coast.
- (2) To serve as the vigorous conscious political vanguard for removing all forms of oppression and for the establishment of a democratic government.
- (3) To secure and maintain the complete unity of the chiefs and people of the Colony, Ashanti, Northern Territories and Trans-Volta.
- (4) To work in the interest of the trade union movement in the country for better conditions of employment.
- (5) To work for a proper reconstruction of a better Gold Coast in which the people shall have the right to live and govern themselves as free people.
- (6) To assist and facilitate in any way possible the realization of a united and self-governing West Africa.<sup>1</sup>

A mass rally was called in Accra on June 12 to establish the party. The meeting attended by more than sixty thousand people resolved that the Committee on Youth Organizations should be changed to an independent political association and named the Convention People's Party (C.P.P.).

The opportunist leaders of the U.G.C.C. who, in their meeting at Saltpond held at the same time, passed a decision to expel NKRUMAH, changed tactics upon getting the news of the formation of the new party. The leadership meeting of June 16 set up a conciliation committee (consisting of two clergymen and a lawyer) to allay the conflict between them and NKRUMAH. The committee proposed that NKRUMAH

<sup>1</sup> KWAME NKRUMAH, *Ghana*, New York, 1957, pp. 100—101.



be reinstated as General Secretary, and the new party be accepted as the vanguard of the U.G.C.C. national movement. NKRUMAH was inclined to agree, but the right-wing leaders did not accept the decision, and all but one member (GEORGE GRANT, the President) of the leadership handed in their resignation. Thereupon GRANT, on NKRUMAH's proposal, convened a conference of U.G.C.C. delegates in Saltpond. The conference, which was attended by forty to fifty thousand people in addition to the delegates, accepted the suggestion of the conciliation committee and proposed re-election of the leadership. The ex-members of the leadership were opposed to this. It was moved that NKRUMAH should be reinstated in his function, but the new party should be dissolved. NKRUMAH was willing to accept on condition that the conference would elect a new leadership to carry out the programme to be adopted. The ex-leaders were opposed to this, too. The conference then brought in a vote of censure against them, and when NKRUMAH announced that he formed no claim to the secretaryship and would resign from the party, too, the participants of the conference accepted his offer with enthusiasm and took a stand in favour of the new party. This meant the birth of Ghana's mass revolutionary party.

### *The Coussey Commission*

In January 1949 the British government, in accordance with the recommendations of the WATSON report, appointed another Commission under Judge J. H. COUSSEY to work out a constitution along the proposed lines. In addition to the chairman, the COUSSEY Commission consisted of thirty-five African members, twenty-three of whom were nominated by the Governor, who, it was said, had selected them so as to represent all strata of the people and all the different political views (this, however, was untrue, since representatives of neither the workers nor the small farmers nor the small traders were included); the remaining twelve members of the Commission were representatives of the three Councils of Chiefs (the Joint Provincial Council of the Colony, the Council of the Confederation of Ashanti, and the Northern Territories Territorial Council) which appointed four members each.

The Commission functioned from January to August 1949. Its report published on October 26 proposed far-reaching changes in both the central and the local administrative system.

As concerns the legislature, the Commission recommended that the former Legislative Council be superseded by a bicameral parliament: a thirty-eight-member upper house comprising thirty-six selected members beside an appointed representative of the Chamber of Commerce and another of the Chamber of Mines, and a seventy-eight-member lower house, all members of which, except three appointed colonial officials, would have been elected by the people. In case the bicameral system would be unacceptable to the government, the report devised an alternative proposal for the establishment of a unicameral legislative council, in which one-third of the members would have been elected by the provincial councils, and two-thirds by the people, except the representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber of Mines as well as the ex-officio nominated three colonial officials. The Commission proposed that every taxpayer over 25 years of age should have the right to vote, and the elections should take place in the towns through direct vote and in the provinces through electoral colleges.

The Commission made a similarly radical proposal for the composition of the Executive Council. It recommended that the Council be composed of twelve members

and, though leaving the Governor in the presidency, should comprise only three appointed colonial officials and eight Africans (including the Speaker and at least five other members of the Legislative Council). According to this version, the Executive Council ought to be jointly responsible to the Legislative Council, so that in case any governmental motion was voted down, the Executive Council should resign.

As far as the reform of the local administrative system was concerned, the COUSSEY Commission essentially repeated the recommendations of the WATSON Commission. The report proposed that each territory<sup>1</sup> should have its own territorial council, with two-thirds of the members being elected and one-third comprised of the chiefs, while its powers as executive organ would be defined occasionally by the central government;<sup>2</sup> the necessary financial means would also be centrally provided, control over its budget and financial management being exercised by the central government, while each territorial council would control the local authorities and organs within its own jurisdiction.

By building the Legislative Council solely upon elected members, and ensuring the Africans a two-thirds majority in the Executive Council, the proposal of the COUSSEY Commission meant the greatest step yet forward; although, by leaving the presidency in the hands of the Governor and making three colonial officials ex-officio members of the Executive Council, the COUSSEY Commission showed that it regarded political guidance invariably as a task of the colonial staff of the British government, reserving for African members only the function of criticizing the official policy. This tendency was still more apparent from the fact that the COUSSEY Commission had let the Governor have the exceptional power to invalidate any act passed by the Legislative Council and to put into force any bill rejected by it.

This explains why, the very day the report of the Commission was made public, the British government hastened to declare its acceptance subject to some modifications.

Besides deciding for a unicameral Legislative Council despite the recommendation of the Commission, the British government made three changes in the proposed measures:

1. It refused to accept that the Executive Council be responsible to the Legislative Council; it insisted that the Executive Council should be answerable to the Governor in the future, too.

2. It rejected also the principle of joint responsibility of the Legislative Council members and decided that the Legislative Council should have the right to dismiss only individual ministers, but not the Executive Council as a whole.

3. It did not accept the proposal that the elected Speaker of the Legislative Council be an ex-officio member of the Executive Council; instead it decided that the Legislative Council members whom the Governor appointed to the Executive Council should choose from among themselves the Speaker of the Legislative Council.

<sup>1</sup> The Coussey Commission proposed the division of the country into four territories by carving out Trans-Volta and Togoland as a fourth province in addition to the "Colony", Ashanti and the Northern Territories.

<sup>2</sup> The Commission on its behalf recommended that the central government should transfer as many functions as possible to the regional governments, mainly in the fields of health, education, public works and social affairs.



*"Positive Action". General Strike in January 1950. Nkrumah's Arrest*

NKRUMAH's announcement at the June constitutional conference of his party that the slogan "self-government now" should be upheld by a policy of "Positive Action" caused great excitement both among the chiefs and among his former associates, the U.G.C.C. leaders, who interpreted it as incitement to revolt. When the chiefs summoned him and asked for an explanation, NKRUMAH set forth his position and then published a pamphlet entitled *What I mean by Positive Action* explaining in detail that "Positive Action" meant no threat of violence but recourse to all available legitimate means (strike, boycott and civil disobedience among them) in case it would prove impossible to persuade the British government to fulfil the just demand of the people for the introduction of self-government. He stressed that they would study the CUSSEY report as soon as it was published, and if they should find its proposals unacceptable, they would expound their own ideas and proposals, and only in case of their rejection would they have recourse to the means of "Positive Action".

After his pamphlet was published, NKRUMAH propounded this correct interpretation of "Positive Action" at mass meetings first in Accra and then in a number of other towns of the country.

The report of the CUSSEY Commission was made public on October 26, 1949. As the report proposed only ambiguous reforms and did not envisage immediate self-government, it roused profound indignation both within the party and in broad masses of the people. The Convention People's Party called a mass gathering to discuss the report on November 20. The rally, which was attended by representatives of fifty-two trade unions,<sup>1</sup> after a careful consideration of the report declared that "the Coussey report and His Majesty's Government's statement thereto are unacceptable to the country as a whole", and emphasized that the Gold Coasters demanded immediate self-government, that is, full dominion status within the Commonwealth.

On December 15 NKRUMAH addressed to the Governor a letter stating on behalf of the C.P.P. that if the government disregarded the popular will expressed at the November 20 rally, the party would resort to the means of "Positive Action": it would start a civil disobedience campaign and demand the convocation of a constituent assembly of elected representatives of the people to discuss the CUSSEY report and draw up a new Constitution.

Thereafter NKRUMAH announced at another popular meeting in Accra that, in case the British government would not respond to the demands of the people in two weeks, the party would start the "Positive Action" campaign. He pointed out at the same time that the campaign should be conducted within the limits of the law, by abstaining from any act of violence (such as burning of buildings, looting, damage).

The British government did not fail to respond: the answer of the colonial administration to the challenge was that the editors of the papers backing the C.P.P. action were put in jail, and NKRUMAH was sentenced, for violation of the press laws (an article published in the Sekondi *Morning Telegraph*), to a fine of £300 or four months in prison.

<sup>1</sup> Only the Councils of Chiefs and two organizations — the U.G.C.C. and the Aborigines' Rights Defence Society — failed to send representatives to the big rally.

NKRUMAH's followers raised the money, so he could continue his activities. Upon his return to Accra after a few days' propaganda campaign in the country, in the night of January 5 the police delivered him a letter from a high official of the colonial administration, Chief Secretary R. H. SALOWAY, summoning him to appear in his office the following day. During the talks the following morning SALOWAY tried to persuade NKRUMAH to withdraw his appeal for "Positive Action". NKRUMAH declined, and explained that the only aim of "Positive Action" was to achieve by peaceful means that the people might decide by themselves whether or not to accept the recommendations of the CUSSEY report.

Despite the failure of the talks, the colonial administration announced over the local radio the same day that the "Positive Action" campaign had been abandoned. NKRUMAH immediately called a mass meeting where he refuted this announcement. The Executive Committee of the party resolved to start the "Positive Action" drive if the government should not respond to the people's demand in a very few days.

True, SALOWAY on January 8 issued a written summons requesting that the "Positive Action" call be suspended and promising that the government would review the situation the same day, but since neither that day nor the next brought anything from the government, at a popular meeting in the afternoon of January 9 NKRUMAH appealed to the people, inviting them — except health and public utility workers and police employees — to start a general strike at midnight of the 9th. At meetings held in Cape Coast, Sekondi and Takoradi the following day NKRUMAH called upon the workers to join in the strike.

Making use of his absence, the colonial administration addressed to the strikers a radio message calling upon them to resume work. After NKRUMAH's return on the 10th, the population of Accra, to express its stand for "Positive Action", staged a mass demonstration of protest in the morning and a mass rally in the afternoon. The shops were closed, factories and communication stopped, all economic activity came to a halt. The colonial administration responded by police terror, prohibited every assembly, started to carry out house searches and arrests. The papers of the C.P.P. were suppressed, their editors imprisoned, and their premises ransacked and closed down. The government-aided press organs (*Gold Coast Bulletin*, *Gold Coast Review*) instigated without restraint against the C.P.P. and its leaders. On January 17 the police raided the offices of the party, seized the papers and leaflets found there, and arrested Party Secretary KOJO BOTSIO. Then followed arrests of other leaders of the party, and finally of NKRUMAH on January 22. All of them were brought to trial and sentenced to various terms of imprisonment. NKRUMAH got one year in jail on each of the charges of incitement, call for illegal strike and instigation through the press.

*The 1951 Constitution and Elections in February 1951.*

*Formation of the Nkrumah Cabinet*

The British government was disappointed in its hope of being able to paralyze the movement by removing its leaders. The imprisonment of NKRUMAH and his associates not only did not impair their prestige in the eyes of the people but rather enhanced it; it did not discourage the party but stimulated it to continue the struggle more energetically.

The British government found itself at the crossroads. As yet, it did not think at all of checking the movement by granting full self-government. Thus it had to choose



between two ways: either to abandon the Coussey plan of a pseudo-Constitution and stick to the old, obsolete system of colonial administration (which would rule out, for the time being, every possibility of reconciliation with the Gold Coasters), or to follow the beaten track by carrying out the constitutional reform proposed by the Coussey Commission in the hope that the leaders of the African masses aspiring for independence, if confronted with an accomplished fact, would understand that semi-independence of the Coussey type still meant much more to them than anything they had had before.

NKRUMAH was still in prison when the British government published the new draft Constitution, which was essentially in line with the proposals of the Coussey report, subject to the afore-mentioned modifications effected by the government. The gist of it was a considerable change in the composition and the character of the Legislative and Executive councils. The legislature (House of Assembly) was to consist of 9 nominated and 75 elected members; 38 of the latter to be elected through direct vote in the towns and through indirect vote in the provinces, 37 seats being distributed among representatives of the Electoral Colleges of the Northern Territories (19), of the Joint Provincial Council (11), of the Asanteman Council (6) and the Southern Togoland Council.<sup>1</sup>

According to the new Constitution the Executive Council had, in addition to the Governor as President, eleven members: three European officials and eight Africans. And what is more important than the African majority: the members of the Council, though not being called Ministers, were invested with ministerial responsibilities which meant that they were answerable, not to the Governor, but to the House of Assembly. In other words: policy-making in the various fields of public administration was taken out of the hands of nominated government officials, whom until then the legislature could not remove but only criticize; thus political guidance was entrusted to executives having ministerial powers whom the House of Assembly could vote down or relieve any time it disagreed with their policy.

The reforms introduced by the new Constitution were, of course, far from satisfactory to the Convention People's Party, which demanded *self-government at once*. One could by no means accept as self-government a system under which only less than half of the legislators (38 out of 84) were democratically elected representatives of the people, while the highest function was held by the Governor appointed by the British government. This notwithstanding, the Convention People's Party, wisely taking stock of the situation and upholding its principles — considering that the new Constitution, despite all its shortcomings, was a great advance towards self-government — declared itself ready to take part in the legislative elections to be held under the new Constitution.

The elections of February 1951 brought total victory to the Convention People's Party. The C.P.P. candidates were elected in 29 of 33 provincial constituencies and in all five districts of the capital, so that 34 of the 38 elected members represented the Convention People's Party. Further seats were won by three members of DANQUAH's opposition party and an "independent" candidate. NKRUMAH, still in prison, was elected in his absence by a great majority (22,780 of the 23,122 votes cast) in the central district of Accra.

The election results put the British government in an awkward position and compelled it to release NKRUMAH and his associates immediately and to consent

<sup>1</sup> This latter provision differed from the Coussey proposal, in which representatives of the "native authorities" would have constituted only one-third, and not half, of all elected members.

that the able leader of the Gold Coast peoples might take his seat in the House of Assembly, as well as in the Executive Council as "Leader of Government Business".

### *The First Steps of the Nkrumah Government*

The NKRUMAH government started business by issuing the Local Government Ordinance. This regulation settled the question essentially on the line of the Coussey proposals. It divided the country into 37 districts (14 in the "Colony", 10 in Ashanti, 9 in the Northern Territories, and 4 in Trans-Volta). Every district established its own council. Urban and local councils were formed within the districts. There were altogether 14 urban and 229 local councils. The councils on every level were composed of elected and nominated members in the ratio of two to one. Election of members to the urban and local councils took place through direct vote. The franchise was granted to every man and woman over 21 years who owned a land or a house in the area, or who for six months before the elections had been resident there and paid the local taxes. District council members were elected and delegated by the urban and local councils.

The proposals of the Coussey Commission differed from the provisions of NKRUMAH's ordinance on local government in two essential points:

1. Imposition of local taxes under the ordinance was the duty of the urban and local councils, and not of the district councils as proposed by the Coussey Commission;

2. the ordinance did not establish territorial councils and administration as proposed in the Coussey report, and it placed the senior officials of the provinces under direct central guidance and control (Minister of Local Government). The existing Councils of Chiefs — the Joint Provincial Council of the Colony, the Council of the Confederation of Ashanti, and the Northern Territories Territorial Council — remained in office.

This latter provision of the ordinance, as will be seen below, gave rise to rather strong resistance on the part of the opposition and became one of the main issues of the political struggle between the government and the opposition in the years 1954 to 1956.

An equally urgent concern of the NKRUMAH government was to organize public education. To begin with, a detailed plan was mapped out to introduce for all children a six-year primary course on a compulsory basis. The draft was enacted by the legislature in August 1951, and the new system started from January 1952.

In March 1952 another important amendment was made to the Constitution: the Executive Council was changed to a Cabinet of Ministers under the Prime Minister, who was responsible, not to the Governor, but to the Legislative Assembly, and who was to be elected by the legislature on the recommendation of the Governor. The Legislative Assembly elected the other Ministers, at the proposal of the Prime Minister, also on the recommendation of the Governor.

The arrangement by which the Governor's right of recommendation was left intact served merely the purpose of face-saving, because, though failing a provision by law, it practically stood to reason that the Governor at every time had to recommend Parliament to elect the leader of the majority party to the office of Prime Minister, and to appoint the persons chosen by the latter to the posts of cabinet ministers.



On March 21, 1952, the Legislative Assembly, upon the Governor's recommendation, elected NKRUMAH Prime Minister by 45 votes to 34, with 8 abstentions (which was a remarkable result considering that there were in Parliament altogether 34 members of the Convention People's Party).

NKRUMAH considered the main task of his government to be the struggle for full independence (in and outside the Legislative Assembly). To carry this struggle to success, it was necessary first of all to amend the Constitution in force.

The efforts of the NKRUMAH government to meet its responsibilities at the helm of the country were greatly paralyzed by two main provisions of the 1951 Constitution which were in contradiction to the principle of democratic self-government: 1. three British colonial officials were ex-officio members of the government; 2. thirty-seven representatives elected by the traditional "native authorities" stood for the interests of the chiefs, not of the broad masses of the people. The Convention People's Party and the popular masses behind it did not for a moment cease to demand the elimination of these shortcomings of the Constitution.

Immediately after his appointment as Prime Minister, NKRUMAH started negotiations with the British Governor on the necessary constitutional reforms, and later, in June, talked also with the British Secretary for the Colonies, LYTTLETON, during his visit to the Gold Coast. The Colonial Secretary told NKRUMAH that, if he would submit his proposals after consultation with the chiefs and the people, the British government and the colonial administration would examine and discuss them; NKRUMAH interpreted this to mean that the government should take the initiative and ask for the opinion of the chiefs and the people. On October 1, 1953, NKRUMAH delivered a speech in the Legislative Assembly, taking up one by one the constitutional issues to be settled, and called upon the chiefs and the people to consider these questions and submit their views and proposals to the government.

The Prime Minister's appeal received wide response in spite of the fact that the regional assemblies, the opposition parties (Ghana Congress Party, Ghana Nationalist Party) and the Gold Coast Trade Union Congress disagreed with the method proposed by NKRUMAH for the discussion of a constitutional reform. In six months — before the end of March — 131 political and social organizations submitted their ideas and proposals to the government, which then issued a White Paper on Constitutional Reform.

On July 10, 1953, NKRUMAH — who had meanwhile been elected "Life Chairman" at the national conference of the party in June — on behalf of his party tabled a draft resolution in the Legislative Assembly. He proposed that Parliament should endorse the White Paper and empower the Cabinet to appeal to the British government, requesting it to submit to the British Parliament a bill on the granting of independence to the Gold Coast within the Commonwealth, and, pending the necessary constitutional and administrative measures, to amend the 1951 Constitution in force for the Gold Coast so that the Legislative Assembly should consist of members elected by secret ballot, and the Cabinet of Ministers should comprise only members of the Legislative Assembly and be responsible to the latter. After a thorough debate the legislature adopted the draft unanimously.

On the basis of this act as adopted and of the White Paper, the government entered into negotiations with the British government. The talks lasted several months, but at last the British government, under pressure from public opinion, had to yield and agreed to the appropriate amendments to the Constitution.

### *The 1954 Constitution and Elections in June 1954*

By virtue of the new Constitution of 1954 the unicameral legislature (National Assembly) had 104 members elected through direct vote, of whom 7 represented urban districts (three from Accra, two from Kumasi, and one from Cape Coast and Sekondi-Takoradi each), 97 were territorial representatives (39 for the "Colony", 19 for Ashanti, 26 for the Northern Territories and Northern Togo, and 13 for Trans-Volta and Southern Togo). The representatives were elected for a term of four years. The members (at least eight) of the Cabinet of Ministers were appointed, upon recommendation of the Prime Minister, by the National Assembly from among its own members. The Ministers were collectively responsible to the National Assembly.

The new Constitution still did not mean full self-government, for the British Governor remained in his post, controlling the matters of foreign policy and defence. One cannot even say that the 1954 Constitution allowed complete self-government in the handling of internal affairs (as was alleged by most Western bourgeois authors<sup>1</sup>), because the police was invariably controlled by the Governor. (Still, the new Constitution meant some progress in this respect, in so far as it set up an Advisory Council to the Governor who was obliged to consult with this body in the exercise of his functions.)

After the new Constitution was put into force in April 1954, the chiefs of the Northern Territories, to counteract the influence of the C.P.P., founded a new political organization, the Northern People's Party, headed by SIMON DIEDONG DOMBO. The idea was to put candidates against those of the C.P.P. at the forthcoming elections in the Northern Territories, and the chiefs hoped that, making use of their traditional prestige, they would succeed in winning the majority of the vote there and in creating a substantial opposition against the C.P.P. and the NKRUMAH government.

These expectations failed, however. At the elections held in June 1954, the Convention People's Party again won a brilliant victory: it received 79 of the 104 seats in Parliament. The opposition Northern People's Party won 14 seats besides six Independents and five members from four small parties. One of the latter, the Ghana Congress Party, was founded in 1952 by Dr. KOFI A. BUSIA<sup>2</sup> for the fight against the C.P.P. and the NKRUMAH government. It had absorbed DANQUAH's party, the United Gold Coast Convention (which, after NKRUMAH's resignation, was losing more and more ground), and another small opposition party, the remnants of the National Democratic Party, as well as a few C.P.P. dissidents. The party wielded influence only in a very narrow circle and, lacking a mass basis, was unable to acquire national importance.

At the first meeting of the newly elected National Assembly the Northern People's Party demanded recognition as official parliamentary opposition. The government refused the demand on the ground that only a national party could be regarded

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, WARD, *A History of Ghana*, London, 1958, p. 346; HATCH, *Everyman's Africa*, London, 1959, p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> KOFI BUSIA was born of the Wench rulers' family in Ashanti in 1914. He was educated at the local Protestant mission and then taught first at Wesley College in Kumasi and later at Achimota College. From 1939 to 1941 he took courses in history at London and Oxford universities. From 1942 till 1946 he was an assistant district commissioner in the service of the Gold Coast Colony administration. In 1946 he went to Oxford University for another year (on an English scholarship) and took a doctor's degree in philosophy. Returning to his country, he worked in the colonial administration and studied sociology. From 1949 he taught at the new University College of the Gold Coast, and in 1951 he published a scholarly study, *The Position of the Chiefs in the Modern Political System of the Ashanti*. In February 1951 he became a member of the National Assembly as representative of the Ashanti chiefs.



as official parliamentary opposition. The very name of the Northern People's Party indicated that it was a regional party, not a national one. The Speaker of the National Assembly, however, overruled the government's objection and declared the Northern People's Party, as the most numerous opposition party in Parliament, to be the government's official opposition.

### *The Nkrumah Government in Struggle for Independence*

In September 1954 a new opposition party was formed, the National Liberation Movement. The new party, despite its high-sounding name, was essentially a party of the Ashanti people who had initiated its creation, but it soon succeeded in winning support also from those elements who thought that the policy of the Convention People's Party jeopardized the survival of tribalism and their power built on this system, as well as from other sections (for example, part of the cocoa planters who clamoured for a rise in the purchase prices). As concerns the political platform of the movement, it stood in opposition to the Convention People's Party and the government only on one point of principle: in contrast to their efforts at centralization, it demanded introduction of a federal system of government. The Liberation Movement stood on especially firm ground in Ashanti, but it found numerous supporters also in other places among those who were alarmed at the ever increasing influence of the C.P.P. More than one member of even the Convention People's Party went over to the new party, which joined forces with the Northern People's Party to act against the government's policy.

Soon after the formation of the National Liberation Movement (October 1954) the Ashantahene (the major chief of the Ashanti province) and fifty Ashanti chieftains passed a decision, requesting the Queen of England to appoint a Commission to draw up a Federal Constitution for the Gold Coast.

The Convention People's Party opposed the idea of a federation. In December 1954 Prime Minister NKRUMAH made an appeal to the National Liberation Movement and the Ashanti Confederacy Council. While pointing out that at the time when the 1954 Constitution had been drafted (and which had been worked out in consultation with all Councils of Chiefs and the parliamentary opposition) the idea of federation had not even come up, nor had it been mentioned in the programme of the opposition parties during the 1954 elections, he invited the leaders of the National Liberation Movement and the Ashanti Council to meet in conference with the government and discuss the matter. But the Ashanti leaders rejected the offer, saying that the question of a Federal Constitution should be discussed not in "private talks" between the Prime Minister and the regional assemblies and the political parties, but in a Constituent Assembly elected specially for this purpose.

In January 1955 the Colonial Secretary denied the Ashanti chiefs' request for a special commission to be appointed by the Queen to work out a Federal Constitution.

In April the government submitted a proposal to the National Assembly that a commission be set up to draft a Constitution for the country ("to examine the question of a federal system of government for the Gold Coast and the question of a Second Chamber which have been raised in some quarters, and after consultation with responsible bodies and individuals, to make recommendations for the consideration of the Legislative Assembly"<sup>1</sup>).

<sup>1</sup> WARD, *A History of Ghana*, London, 1958, p. 383.

The opposition first moved an amendment to the proposal, suggesting that the commission to be set up should not discuss constitutional matters, but should only prepare a proposal for the convocation of a Constituent Assembly; before the amendment was put to the vote, however, the opposition changed its mind and withdrew from the whole discussion.

The National Assembly sent out the commission, which, though the opposition made no proposal whatever, discussed both the proposal for a federal system of government and that for a bicameral assembly, and finally in its report submitted on July 26, 1955, recommended rejection of both proposals.

The opposition, however, still believed in the support of the British government and sent its federal proposals to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in August 1955. Thereupon the Colonial Secretary, in agreement with the NKRUMAH government, decided to proceed in accordance with the former proposal of the opposition and appointed a "Constitutional Adviser" to work out a draft Constitution acceptable to both parties. This task the British government assigned to Sir FREDERICK BOURNE, former Governor-General of India.

BOURNE arrived in the Gold Coast in September 1955. The opposition, however, refused to co-operate with him. Nevertheless, he made suggestions in which he flatly rejected the idea of federation. At the same time, in order to avoid excessive centralization and to ensure that the government and the legislature, in handling national affairs, gave due consideration to the local requirements and to the opinion of local organs, he proposed the establishment of a regional assembly in any region where a complete network of district councils existed if their majority so desired. He proposed that regional assembly members should be: (a) all members of the legislature elected from the region; (b) an about equal number of members of the district and municipal councils, and (c) those whom the regional assembly deemed necessary to co-opt.

BOURNE did not at all touch upon the matter of setting up a second chamber, but he proposed that the matters affecting the traditional functions or interests of chiefs be discussed in the legislative body only after consultation with the chiefs concerned, whose views should then be made known to members of Parliament.

BOURNE's proposals did not, of course, satisfy the opposition. Two months after the BOURNE report had been published, in February 1956, the government made another attempt to reach an agreement with the opposition. With a view to discussing the proposals of the BOURNE Commission and working out the details, it called a conference to Achimota for February 16. With BOURNE taking part in the talks in his quality of adviser, the conference was attended by eight delegations (the Convention People's Party, the Brong Council of Chiefs, the Ex-Servicemen's Union, the Moslem Council, the Trade Union Congress, the Joint Provincial Council of the Chiefs in the "Colony", the local governing councils in the North, and the Council of Trans-Volta/Togoland Region). The National Liberation Movement, the Northern People's Party, the Ashanti Council of Chiefs and the Northern Territories Council were willing neither to attend the conference nor to submit their views.

The proposals agreed upon at the Achimota conference were broadly in line with the BOURNE proposals, except for the following main points:

(a) Considering that the establishment of the regional assemblies made slow progress (at the time of the conference only two such assemblies existed in the "Colony"), the conference did not make the formation of the regional assemblies dependent on the functioning of a complete network of district councils in the region concerned.

(b) The conference dropped the proposal that all members of the legislative body should be ex-officio members of their regional assembly; instead it proposed that



members of Parliament should also take seats in the regional assemblies in the usual way — on the basis of local elections.

The conference accepted and worked out in detail the recommendation of the BOURNE report concerning the rights of chiefs. It proposed the establishment in each region of a new organ, the House of Chiefs, which should have the duty to advise the government on matters regarding traditional institutions and affairs, and, if it saw necessary, to propose that one or another bill be previously discussed in a select committee, and, in case the Houses of Chiefs of the two Regions so proposed, the government should be obliged to appoint such a select committee.

In April 1956 the government made public its draft Constitution, which was essentially in line with the proposals of the Achimota conference. The National Assembly discussed the draft and, subject to insignificant modifications, adopted it unanimously. The opposition again abstained from taking part in the debate.

In May 1956 the Colonial Secretary declared his readiness to fix a date for independence as soon as the new general elections were over and the new National Assembly would adopt by a "reasonable majority" a resolution requesting the British government to declare the Gold Coast an independent state.

#### *Elections in July 1956. Birth of the Sovereign State of Ghana*

The elections in July 1956 were held under the new Constitution. The Convention People's Party again won a more than two-thirds majority, gaining 71 seats of 104 (all 44 seats for the "Colony", 8 of the 13 seats for the Trans-Volta/Togo region, 8 of the 20 seats for Ashanti, and 11 of the 26 seats for the Northern Territories). On the side of the opposition the National Liberation Movement gained 12 seats and the Northern People's Party won 15, in addition to 3 Independents (one of whom supported the government) and 3 members of splinter groups.

On August 3 the new National Assembly empowered the government (by 72 votes to none, since the opposition abstained) to submit to the British government a request for the granting of independence.

On September 18 the Colonial Secretary stated that he endorsed the resolution adopted "by a reasonable majority" of the National Assembly, agreed that the Gold Coast should become an independent state on March 6, 1957, and approved of the National Assembly resolution on the change of the country's name to Ghana.

The opposition still did not accept defeat. The government (that is, the Convention People's Party) and the opposition disagreed mainly on three points. The opposition demanded (1) greater autonomy for the regional assemblies and its laying down in the Constitution, (2) a bicameral Parliament, and (3) the setting up of an eight-member Council of State, composed of the Governor, the head chiefs of the four traditional regions (Ashanti, Northern Territories, the "Colony", Trans-Volta/Togo), the Prime Minister, the leader of the opposition, and the Attorney-General.

The negotiations held in October between government and opposition brought about some rapprochement between the positions of the parties, but no definitive agreement was reached. So much so that in December the Asanteman Council threatened to secede, and when the Colonial Secretary cabled the Council that the United Kingdom was in no position to support the idea of secession, the Council asked the Secretary either to visit the Gold Coast or to send out a commission to reconcile the divergent positions. In view of the urgency of the matter (the Ghana Independence Bill already lay before the British Parliament), Colonial Secretary LENNOX-

BOYD accepted the invitation and, during his visit to the Gold Coast in January 1957, succeeded in reconciling the opposing parties.

The opposition dropped the idea of a second chamber and a Council of State as well as a constitutional provision for the powers of the regional assemblies. On the other hand, the government agreed that:

(1) the powers of the regional assemblies should be worked out by a regional constitutional commission in which more than two-thirds of the members would be representatives of regional interests, and which, in nine months from the beginning of independence, was to present its proposal to Parliament, which in turn should

fix the powers of the regional assemblies on this basis in a separate act of legislation;

(2) a two-thirds majority should be required for any amendment to the Constitution, and in especially important matters (namely, if it came to the dissolution or suspension of a regional assembly, or to a change in the boundaries of a region) the amendment bill should be definitively adopted in Parliament only if two-thirds of the regional assemblies and the Houses of Chiefs had previously expressed their agreement;

(3) the Prime Minister should every time consult in advance the leader of the opposition about any proposal he was going to make to the Governor for appointments to the civil service.

On the basis of this agreement the British government in its White Paper published in February 1957 issued the final text of the new Constitution. Meanwhile, on February 7, the Ghana Independence Act had received the Royal assent.

The proclamation of Ghana's independence took place with all solemnity on March 6, 1957.

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## CHAPTER IV

### NIGERIA

#### *The Richards Constitution*

The first few years following the end of World War II in Nigeria were marked by the struggle, first against the draft Constitution under preparation and then against the new Constitution in force. Governor RICHARDS tabled his draft in the Legislative Council in 1946, and the new Constitution came into effect on January 1, 1947.

The RICHARDS Constitution divided Nigeria into three parts — the Northern, Eastern and Western Regions. Each received a sham parliament called the Regional Assembly.<sup>1</sup> But the Regional Assemblies were not real parliaments: their members were British colonial officials and other persons appointed by the British Governor or nominated by the chiefs; furthermore, they were no legislative bodies, their functions consisting merely in giving advice and sending representatives to the central Legislative Council. This latter, which was presided over by the Governor, was composed of 13 colonial officials as ex-officio members and 24 unofficial members who were either appointed by the Governor or delegated by the Regional Assemblies comprising also ex-officio or nominated members.<sup>2</sup> The Legislative Council had only four elected members: three for Lagos and one for the Calabar district, elected by persons over 21 years who had a yearly income of at least £50.

The Legislative Council remained an advisory body to the Governor, since it was composed mostly of colonial officials in addition to four African members of the Governor's choice. It dealt also with the drafting of bills, but its members were answerable to the Governor, who alone was empowered to relieve them.

The N.C.N.C., which stood up for the unity of the country, and which advocated the establishment of a Legislative Council consisting of elected members, in 1946 conducted a nationwide campaign against the constitutional reform in preparation. This militant stand considerably enhanced the popularity of the party. Its membership was growing rapidly. In 1947, for instance, the Nigerian Trades Union Congress as a body joined the N.C.N.C.

<sup>1</sup> Northern Nigeria got a "bicameral parliament": the Regional Assembly and a House of Chiefs composed of sultans and other paramount chiefs.

<sup>2</sup> From the North four members were delegated by the House of Chiefs and five by the Regional Assembly; from the West two chiefs were nominated by the Governor and four members were delegated by the Regional Assembly; from the East five members were delegated by the Regional Assembly and four were appointed by the Governor to represent the foreign business interests.



But the party lacked unity. Its radical left wing emerged as early as 1946; its militant young members in February 1946 formed the so-called Zikist Movement as the party's youth section. Originally, this organization was set up for the defence of AZIKIWE, whom the colonial administration held responsible and persecuted for the 1945 strike of miners. Already in 1946 the movement gained ground all over the country.

At the beginning of 1947 it had 27 branches, embracing the overwhelming majority of the patriotic youth of Nigeria. The young people made an example of AZIKIWE and almost worshipped him.<sup>1</sup> As the *West African Pilot* wrote reporting on the formation of the movement in its issue of March 2, 1946: "Nevermore shall we allow this evangelist [Azikiwe] to cry his voice hoarse when millions of youths of Nigeria can take up his whisper and echo it all over the world . . . He has lived a life that must live as long as Nigeria lives."<sup>2</sup>

Up to the end of 1948 the Zikist Movement was practically the only youth section of the N.C.N.C., with which it had a common press organ, the *West African Pilot*. Even the Secretariat of the N.C.N.C. formulated this relationship as follows: "The NCNC is the whole and the Zikist Movement is only a part of that whole."<sup>3</sup> However, from the end of 1948 onwards — after the N.C.N.C. adopted a more moderate programme — the most militant members of the Zikist Movement started a campaign under the slogan "Positive Action", calling upon the masses to refuse co-operation with the government. In October 1948 an active member of the Movement, OSITA AGWUMA, delivered a lecture entitled "A Call for Revolution", professing a "new philosophy" whose "adherents will see nothing good in co-operating with the British Government as long as we remain enslaved".<sup>4</sup> In February 1949 the leader of the Zikist Movement, H. R. ABDALLAH, published in the *Pilot* an appeal under the title "The Age of Positive Action", where he wrote among other things:

"I hate the Union Jack with all my heart because it divides the people wherever it goes . . . It is a symbol of persecution, of domination, a symbol of exploitation, . . . brutality . . . We have passed the age of petition, . . . the age of resolution, . . . the age of diplomacy . . . This is the age of action — plain blunt and positive action."

The colonial government reacted by having ten leaders of the Movement arrested and sent to trial on the charge of sedition. At the trial held in February 1949 the accused got severe sentences of imprisonment and fines.

The elimination of the most militant leaders of the Movement retarded the activities of Zikists for a time. A few months later, however, the Movement was reviving as a consequence of the Enugu events of November 1949.

At that time the workers of the Enugu coal mines started a slowdown strike to obtain remedy for their complaints. On November 18 the colonial authorities, being afraid that the explosives stored in the mines might get into the hands of Zikists, directed the explosives to be removed and committed to the care of armed police. Seeing that the mine owners intended to close down pits and lock out the strikers, the miners tried to prevent the removal of the explosives and resisted. The police opened fire, causing a toll of 21 dead and 51 wounded.

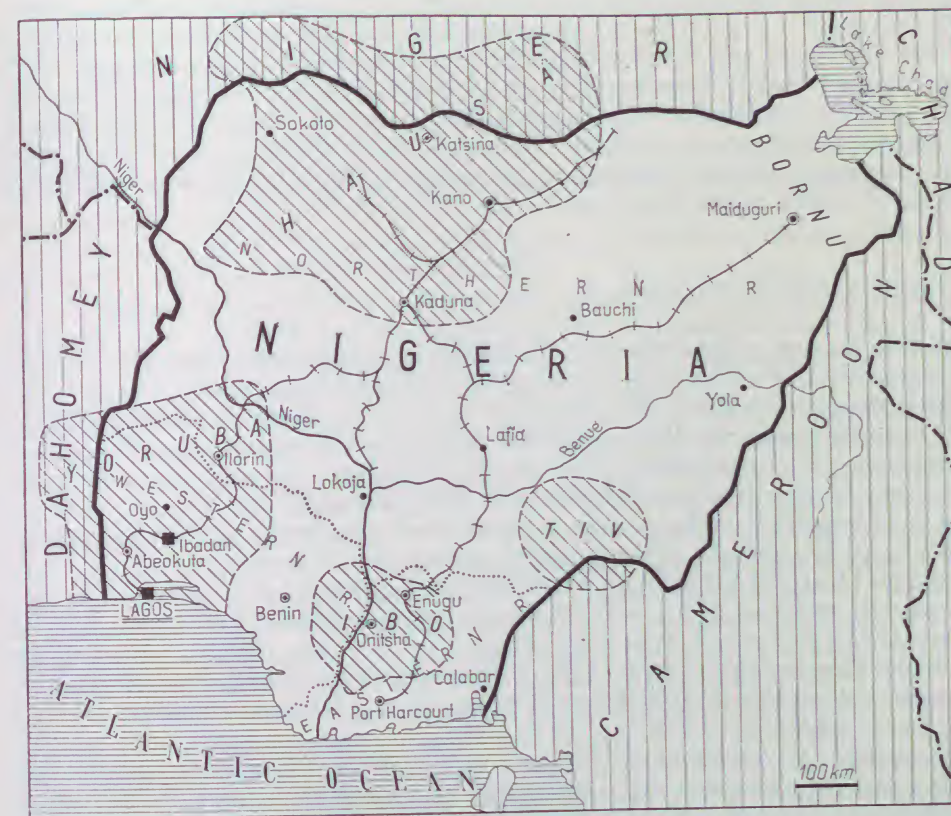
<sup>1</sup> See the passage on the National Church below.

<sup>2</sup> J. S. COLEMAN, *Nigeria: Background to Nationalism*, pp. 296–297.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 298–299.

<sup>4</sup> *West African Pilot*, Oct. 27, 1948.

Under the impact of the Enugu events, patriots belonging to various parties combined and set up a National Emergency Committee, which functioned nearly nine months. Up to September 1950 it seemed that this understanding would be a lasting affair. However, the Committee was not a militant organization. Its only considerable result during nine months of existence was that the racial practices applied within the teaching staff of University College were ended. The Committee broke up in October 1950 because the leaders were scrambling for positions and also tribal conflicts flared up again.



The Zikist Movement remained the militant organization of the true patriots. Following the Enugu events, the Movement organized popular meetings and demonstrations one after another under the auspices of either the Emergency Committee or the N.C.N.C. The colonial authorities sent out police to disperse the people. To the police volleys and atrocities the masses often responded by fomenting riots, manhandling Europeans, ravaging public buildings, and so forth.

The colonial government appointed a Commission to investigate into the Enugu "riots". The Commission based its report mostly on what had been said by representatives of the colonial security organs. The report charged the Zikist Movement with having organized a conspiracy and prepared an armed uprising. A security officer told the Commission that Zikists had been hoarding arms and ammunition since early 1948. Another charge was that they had made speeches inciting to rebellion,



and also that they had devised a plot to kill a high official of the colonial administration. Relying on the report, the police raided the homes of Zikists and was said to have found a large amount of inciting literature. Several members of the Movement were arrested and imprisoned, and in April 1950 the Governor banned the Zikist Movement. However, the Zikists who had been left at liberty re-formed their organization as the Freedom Movement a month later. The new organization, which had its local branches mainly in Lagos and in towns of the Eastern Region, as well as in some places of Western and Northern Nigeria, aimed at the destruction of "all forms of imperialism and the establishment of a free Socialist Republic of Nigeria fighting in and out of Parliament employing nonviolent revolutionary tactics".<sup>1</sup> But the Movement was not long-lived. The personal conflicts among the Lagos and Port Harcourt leaders discouraged many of its followers and the reorganization in 1951 of the N.C.N.C. and the formation in 1952 of the N.C.N.C. youth section made the Freedom Movement as a separate entity practically superfluous. (As will be seen below, the most militant member among the Zikists, NDUKA EZE, also pursued his political activities in the framework of the N.C.N.C.)

### *The National Church of Nigeria*

Working in close co-operation with the Zikists was the National Church of Nigeria, which had been formed in the second half of 1948 and represented, as it were, the religious wing of the Zikist Movement (and later of the Freedom Movement). One and the same person was leader of both organizations in many towns. The aim of the Movement was to worship AZIKIWE<sup>2</sup> and to cultivate the nationalist spirit. At divine services they read aloud, besides the Bible, passages from N.C.N.C. publications and AZIKIWE's writings. The sermons were practically nationalist-minded political speeches, and the hymns and prayers were toning in with them.<sup>3</sup>

AZIKIWE himself was largely responsible for the propagation of his divine mission. For example, we read in his book *Renasant Africa*, published in 1937 (p. 17): "I will publicly admit that I have never claimed to be a New Messiah, although for reasons best known to a section of the West African Press I have been elevated to that creditable and immortal position. It is possible that I may be one of the apostles of the new Africa."

The propaganda of the National Church — in contrast to Zikist propaganda proper, which was directed against the political rule of imperialism — assailed first of all the European Churches and missionaries. COLEMAN refers to a sermon entitled "Nigeria in the Tentacles of Religious Imperialism", and quotes from an article where

<sup>1</sup> COLEMAN, *op. cit.*, pp. 301—302.

<sup>2</sup> In November 1950, when AZIKIWE attended a festive Church service, one of the Church dignitaries gave him the benediction and likened him to Christ. Another Church leader wrote in a book the following: "God sends His prophets to various nations from age to age to lead, teach, succour, defend and reform His human creations in travail, despair and decay. Thus the Arabs had Mohammed . . . [The] Russians had Lenin . . . [The] Indians had Gandhi . . . And Africa has Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe." (K. O. K. ONYIOHA, *The National Church of Nigeria: Its Catechism and Credo*. Yaba, 1950, p.36.)

<sup>3</sup> One of their prayers read as follows: "O Almighty and everlasting God of the universe, God of Africa . . . Give ear to the prayers of Thy children who assemble here . . . to implore Thee to give us . . . freedom from foreign domination, and freedom to own and enjoy this portion of Thy earth which Thou hast, without a mistake, allocated to us . . ." (From "National Hymns and Prayers, National Church of Nigeria and the Cameroons", quoted by COLEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 303).

it is pointed out that none of the missionaries assists the Nigerians' freedom movement, that the missionaries "are enemies of our Freedom; . . . in the guise of Christianity they use our churches and schools to suppress and ridicule our political consciousness".<sup>1</sup>

### *The Nigerian Labour Movement after the War*

Prior to 1946 the workers of the European firms established in Nigeria were not unionized. At the end of 1946 NDUKA EZE<sup>2</sup> formed a union of the workers of the United Africa Company. The union grew very rapidly and in 1950 already had 18,000 members. EZE played a major role in the fact that in 1947 the Nigerian Trades Union Congress joined the N.C.N.C. When in 1948 the majority of the Congress broke with the N.C.N.C., EZE and his adherents engineered a split in the trade-union movement and formed the Nigerian National Federation of Labour, which functioned as the labour wing of the N.C.N.C.

In September 1949 EZE launched a daily paper entitled *Labour Champion*. The last issue of the paper appeared on June 30, 1950.

At the time of the Enugu events EZE, as Executive President of the Zikist Movement, formed a "National Labour Committee" to safeguard the mineworkers' interests. In Enugu he delivered a speech which could be construed as an intention of pushing the labour movement on to the course of "positive action" advocated by the Zikists. For this action the colonial authorities charged EZE with sedition, so that after November 1949 he had to refrain from further action for a while. But already at the beginning of 1950 he made new attempts to restore the unity of the trade-union movement, and by the end of May 1950 he managed to bring to life the Nigerian Labour Congress as the new trade-union centre, which then included, besides EZE's National Federation of Labour, also the Nigerian Trades Union Congress and the Government Workers' Union. In August 1950, as general secretary of the new centre he initiated and directed a strike of the workers of all commercial enterprises. The strike ended with the victory of the workers (a cost-of-living grant of 12.5 per cent). After the year's end, however, EZE's position became shaky. Among other things, this was due to the failure of another strike of the Nigerian Labour Congress in December 1950. After this the conditions of the workers began deteriorating (dismissals and wage cuts), and this led to the lowering of the trade unions' prestige. Another reason was that EZE turned sharply against AZIKIWE since, with reference to the example of Russia and China, he was more and more openly critical of the "bourgeois leadership" of the parties, including the N.C.N.C.,<sup>3</sup> and in January 1951 he failed in his attempt to form a Nigerian "Labour party". The result was that in February 1951 AZIKIWE expelled him from the N.C.N.C. government and

<sup>1</sup> COLEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 303.

<sup>2</sup> NDUKA EZE went to mission schools and later worked as a clerk with the United Africa Company. He was among the first to join the Zikist Movement, of which he was first an Executive Committee member, later Executive Secretary, and finally — in 1949/50 — Executive President.

<sup>3</sup> In a meeting of the Freedom Movement in February he said among other things: "Nigeria is pregnant with political confusion; . . . there are so many parties . . . and yet the yearnings and aspirations of the people remained unfulfilled . . . The masses and workers are the backbone of the country. Experience in Russia and China proved that conclusively. The masses must recognize and accept their position as the vanguard of the liberation movement." COLEMAN, *op. cit.*, p. 306.



charged that EZE was inciting against him at home and abroad, and that it was mainly due to his activities that the Zikist Movement had been banned.

After the break between EZE and AZIKIWE the most militant elements of the Zikist Movement, encouraged by the success of the Convention People's Party of the Gold Coast, formed in Eastern Nigeria the Nigerian Convention People's Party (C.P.P.), which openly turned against AZIKIWE and the N.C.N.C. As a counter-measure, AZIKIWE, in 1952, founded the N.C.N.C. Youth Movement in order to win over to his party the former members of the banned Zikist and Freedom movements as well as the uncommitted young people, that is, to entice them to leave the C.P.P.

### *The Birth of Parties in Northern Nigeria*

As far back as 1945 a member of the N.C.N.C. radical wing, MALLAM H. R. ABDALLAH, formed at Kano a political group named "Northern Elements Progressive Association" (N.E.P.A.). Soon afterwards ABDALLAH was imprisoned and the organization fell apart.

In 1949 ABUBAKAR BALEWA formed in Northern Nigeria a cultural association called the "Northern People's Congress" (N.P.C.), which was joined also by part of the former N.E.P.A. members. Although not yet a political party, the organization engaged in politics, too. To begin with, it voiced radical political slogans but, owing to the ever growing influence of feudal rulers and traditional chiefs who supported its policy, it gradually became their mouthpiece. BALEWA in 1950 demanded that their representatives should receive half of the seats in the future Federal Parliament, and made Northern Nigerian participation in the Federal Parliament conditional on compliance with that demand.

That same year the radical youth of the Bornu Sultanate in the North formed the Bornu Youth Improvement Association, a cultural and social organization under the direction of IBRAHIM IMAM.

At the beginning of 1950, a social organization named the "Middle Zone League" was formed in the south of the Northern Region with the aim of uniting the peoples of the Middle Belt.

In July 1950 the radical-minded members of the Northern People's Congress resigned and then formed the Northern Progressive Union (N.P.U.). The new party entered into contact with AZIKIWE's N.C.N.C. and placed its propaganda at the service of the struggle for the liquidation of the absolute power of feudal rulers and traditional chiefs in the North and for the improvement of the situation of the peasantry.

### *Formation of the Action Group*

While the Regional Assemblies and the central legislature were discussing the constitutional reform, a new party made its appearance in the political arena of Nigeria. OBAFEMI AWOLowo, who had returned to Ibadan from London in 1948, formed in Western Nigeria the "Egbe Omo Oduduwa",<sup>1</sup> a cultural group which had been founded at London towards the end of the war. In April 1951 this organization was transformed into a political party under the name "Action Group". Unlike the

<sup>1</sup> See p. 36.

N.C.N.C., which stood for the consolidation of the unity of the country and the establishment of a strong central power, the new party was in favour of a federation of all tribes and regions of Nigeria. In its programme it raised the slogan "freedom and welfare" and demanded the termination of British rule and the elimination of illiteracy, poverty and diseases. The party confined its activity to Western Nigeria for the time being, under the consideration that, when coming to power in the West, it would become able to assert its influence on an all-Nigerian scale later.

### *The 1951 Constitution*

Soon after the RICHARDS Constitution had come into force, the N.C.N.C. sent a delegation to London to talk with the Labour government then in power. The delegation proposed amendments to the Constitution. Colonial Secretary CREECH JONES received the delegation but rejected its proposals. Thereupon the N.C.N.C. conducted a nationwide campaign calling upon the masses to boycott the Legislative and Executive councils to be formed under the Constitution.

Still in 1947 Governor RICHARDS was succeeded by JOHN MACPHERSON.<sup>1</sup> Upon taking office the new Governor announced that the RICHARDS Constitution would be revised. In 1949 he set up a Commission, composed of unofficial members of the Legislative Council, to work out new proposals, and in 1950 he convened the All-Nigerian Constitutional Conference in Ibadan to draft the new Constitution on the basis of the Commission's recommendations. The draft Constitution formulated at the Conference was discussed by the Regional Assemblies and by a specially appointed committee of the central Legislative Council. The new Constitution came into force towards the middle of 1951.

This new Constitution announced with a fuss, however, only aggravated the controversies created by the provisions of the RICHARDS Constitution, namely the division of the country, the growing influence of feudal elements, and the lack of direct suffrage:

(a) it not only maintained the Regional Assemblies in their former composition, but invested them with legislative powers:

(b) also in Western Nigeria it established, besides the Regional Assembly, a House of Chiefs on the model of the North;

(c) on the model of the central Executive Council it established a Regional Executive Council in each of the three Regions:

(d) to replace the former central legislature, it set up a 148-member House of Representatives to be elected by the Regional Assemblies from among their own members; in this Federal Parliament the feudal-influenced North had as many seats as the Western and Eastern Regions had in the aggregate.

### *Crisis in the N.C.N.C.*

In the elections held under the 1951 Constitution the N.C.N.C. obtained the large majority of the votes in the Eastern Region. Also in the West it had a majority, but there several of the elected N.C.N.C. members went over to the Action Group, so that the ministerial government was formed by N.C.N.C. members in the East and by

<sup>1</sup> It is characteristic of RICHARDS' dubious political integrity that upon his return to England he joined the Labour Party, only to switch over to the Liberal Party about eighteen months later; finally, he again changed his mind, deserted the Liberals and joined the Tory camp.



Action Group members in the West. AZIKIWE was not elected to the Federal Parliament, but he was a member for Lagos in the Western Regional Assembly where the Action Group held the majority. From that time on the N.C.N.C., which had until then endorsed the federal solution, was against federation and made propaganda for a boycott of the Federal Parliament.

This provoked a crisis in the N.C.N.C. Several members of the party, who had received portfolios in the federal government, opposed the boycott, saying that the new Constitution ought to be tested. They were ousted from the party, but this did not end the crisis. In January 1953 a few members of the N.C.N.C. government of Eastern Nigeria were relieved because they, too, were against the boycott. N.C.N.C. members who had resigned from the party — members of the Regional Assembly and the Federal Parliament — formed a new political group, the National Independence Party (N.I.P.). Then new elections were held in the Eastern Region but the N.I.P. obtained all in all 9 seats, so that AZIKIWE again made a triumphal entry into the Regional Assembly and remained at the helm of the government as Chief Minister.

### *Party Wrangles in Northern Nigeria*

The winner of the 1951 elections in Northern Nigeria was the N.P.U. This prompted BALEWA to counteract the influence of the N.E.P.U. by changing the cultural character of the Northern People's Congress and constituting it into a political party. This was done in October 1951.

The radical policy of the N.P.U. and its relationship with the N.C.N.C. induced the feudal rulers and tribal chiefs as well as the British government to support BALEWA. The N.E.P.U. demand concerning the composition of the Federal Parliament, as we have seen, was fulfilled by the 1951 Constitution. As against the radicalism of this party, the N.C.N.C. advocated respect for traditions and demanded only gradual and moderate reforms which it expected the established feudal and tribal authorities to carry out (for example, it opposed woman suffrage). Thus the N.C.N.C., after its transformation into a political party, won ever stronger support from the feudal rulers and tribal chiefs as well as from the British government.

But the N.P.U. did not give in. In October 1952 it issued a "statement of principle" in which, discussing the political situation in Northern Nigeria, it made a fierce attack on the sultans and other feudal and tribal leaders, called for the emancipation of the enslaved peasants, for the modernization of the Islam and the Moslem schools, and set as the final goal the people's coming into power. It set the party organizations the immediate task of fighting to remedy the local grievances. The Zikist propaganda conducted by the paper *Comet* published at Kano won great popularity to the party with the Muslim traders and intellectuals, the tribes of the Middle Belt, the youth of the Hausa tribes, the Northerners living in the South, and mainly the poor populations of the Northern Nigerian towns and the other poor people inhabiting the areas adjoining the railways.

### *Parliamentary Debate in March 1953. Enahoro's Proposal and Its Consequences*

On March 31, 1953, Chief ANTHONY ENAHORO, a member of the Action Group, introduced a motion in the central legislature: the House should demand self-government for Nigeria by 1956. The Northern People's Party moved an amendment:

self-government should be granted, not by 1956, but "as soon as is practicable". The Action Group, backed up by the N.C.N.C., insisted on the specific date. A heated debate ensued, and, as the House accepted the amendment proposed by the Northern People's Party, the members of the N.C.N.C. and the Action Group walked out. Thereafter the Western Nigerian members of the federal government resigned, and the N.C.N.C. and the Action Group, hitherto opposed to each other, concluded a pact for the achievement of self-government by 1956, and started a tentative campaign against the Northerners. Angry crowds at Lagos insulted several M.P.s of the Northern People's Party, and the press in both southern Regions kept intensifying the attacks on the party's policy. The reaction of the N.P.P. was the publication of an eight-point programme, which, if implemented, would have been tantamount to the secession of the Northern Region from Nigeria. Thereupon the leaders of the southern parties and their press started still more vehement attacks, calling the Northern People's Party leaders imperialist lackeys who did not represent the views of their own people. Then the N.C.N.C. and the Action Group sent delegations to the towns in the North to make propaganda under the slogan "self-government by 1956". An Action Group delegation headed by S. L. AKINTOLA called a popular meeting at Kano, which ended with bloody clashes that lasted for days between followers of the southern parties, on the one hand, and of the Northern People's Party, on the other. The battle demanded 36 dead (15 for the North and 21 for the South) and 241 wounded.<sup>1</sup>

### *New Talks about the Constitution*

Immediately following the Kano events, on May 21, Colonial Secretary LYTTLETON of Great Britain called the Nigerian party leaders to a conference in London to revise the 1951 (MACPHERSON) Constitution. The talks were conducted first at London during July and August 1953, and then at Lagos in January 1954. The result was a new draft Constitution which the majority of the negotiators found acceptable.<sup>2</sup> This is now the so-called LYTTLETON Constitution of 1954. During the talks the British government promised to convene a new conference for 1956 to discuss further improvements of the Constitution.

### *The 1954 Constitution*

The new Constitution laid the foundations of the Federation of Nigeria, but it did so in a peculiar, contradictory way, to serve the interests of the British government. The three (Northern, Eastern and Western) Regions of Nigeria constituted

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the Kano Disturbances* (16th, 17th, 18th and 19th May 1953), Kaduna, 1953, p. 21.

<sup>2</sup> Participating in the conference were representatives of five parties (Northern People's Party, National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons, Action Group, Northern Progressive Union, United Independence Party). Delegates of the latter party, who demanded the establishment of a strong central government and opposed the extension of the powers of the Regional Assemblies, walked out of the conference. The head of the Action Group, AWOLOWO, also left the conference in its first stage, after rejection of his demand that the city of Lagos be recognized as part of the Western Region. In the second stage of the conference (at Lagos), however, where the issue was again brought up and definitively decided, he also accepted the new Constitution which placed Lagos immediately under the authority of the federal government.



a Federation, with the Southern Cameroons as the fourth<sup>1</sup> and Lagos city as an annex. (The rural districts of former Lagos Colony still belonged to the Western Region.) The British Governor of Nigeria became Governor-General of the Federation, and the Lieutenant-Governors administering the three Regions were promoted Regional Governors.

The Regions obtained enlarged powers, but the Constitution made specific distinction between matters to be dealt with only by the federal legislature and those in which either the Federal House of Representatives or the Regional Houses of Assembly could legislate, laying down at the same time that in case of conflicts of federal and regional laws the federal law should prevail.

The bicameral system remained in force in the Northern and Western Regions (House of Assembly and House of Chiefs), while the Eastern Region retained its unicameral system. The Northern Region had as many representatives elected (92) as had the others together (42 for the Eastern and the Western Region each, 6 for the Southern Cameroons, and 2 for Lagos). In addition, the Federal House of Representatives included among its members six colonial officials who were ex-officio members and six "special members" appointed by the Governor-General. There were 131 elected, four ex-officio and five "special" members in the Northern House of Assembly, and 80 elected members in the Eastern House of Assembly. The President of the Federal House of Representatives and that of the House of Assembly in the Eastern Region were appointed by the Governor-General and the Regional Governor, respectively, while the Western House of Assembly elected its own President. On the other hand, the Northern House of Assembly was presided over by the Governor, and the House of Assembly of the Southern Cameroons by the British Commissioner of the territory.

As regards the suffrage, it was general in the Western Region; in the Eastern Region the right to vote was granted to tax-payers only; in the Northern Region the system of indirect suffrage remained and only the male population had the voting right. Members of the Federal House of Representatives were elected through direct vote. An elected person could be a member of the Federal House of Representatives and of the Regional House of Assembly at the same time. Under the new Constitution it was left to the Regional Governor to work out the election laws (constituencies, polling, etc.).

The federal government ("Executive Council") consisted of ten Ministers (three from the three Regions each and one from the Southern Cameroons), the Northern Nigerian government had thirteen members, and the Eastern and Western governments were composed of ten members each. Besides, three British colonial officials were ex-officio members both in the federal and in the Northern Nigerian government (and were in charge of just the most important governmental departments). In the regional governments one of the members was Prime Minister, yet the Executive Council meetings were presided over by the Regional Governor. The federal government had no Prime Minister, this function was fulfilled by the Governor-General presiding.

The members of the Federal Executive Council were appointed by the Governor-General upon the recommendation of the party which obtained the absolute majority in the elections or polled the most votes in each of the three Regions. The Prime

<sup>1</sup> Under the new Constitution, too, the Northern Cameroons remained a part of the Northern Region, while the Southern Cameroons received a Legislative and an Executive Council of its own.

Minister of each Regional Executive Council was appointed from among the representatives of the majority party by the Governor, who also appointed the other Ministers, upon the proposal of the Prime Minister.

The new Constitution made a noteworthy change in the judiciary. The Regions had courts of their own, and a Federal Supreme Court was set up, which superseded the former West African superior court and was also called to settle disputes between Regions or between a Region and the Federation.

The main features of the new Constitution were the following:

1. It strengthened the position of the Regions against the central executive power;
2. it made it possible for the local majority parties to take over the regional government;
3. since it was practically ruled out that any party should obtain the absolute majority in the federal elections or receive a majority in every Region, the new Constitution made the composition of the federal government dependent on the results of probable attempts at the formation of a coalition;
4. by letting the regional governments work out the election laws, it left the minority parties at the mercy of the party in power in each particular Region.

Even after the introduction of the new Constitution the federal government as well as the regional governments remained under the authority of the British colonial administration. A characteristic fact: in mid-October 1954 the federal and regional governments released a joint statement declaring that the young Nigerians who had pursued their studies in the Soviet Union or in any other socialist state would be debarred from employment in such public services as the police, railways, posts and telegraphs, broadcasting, civil aviation and education; also they called on the trade unions and political parties to purge such people from their ranks. They gave as a reason for this measure the danger of communist infiltration. But this reason was exposed as ill-founded even by such a sworn enemy of communism as GEORGE PADMORE, and what is more, by the *London Times*, which can really not be accused of sympathy with communism.<sup>1</sup>

The LYTTLETON Constitution came into force on October 1, 1954, and the Governor-General appointed AZIKIWE Prime Minister in Eastern Nigeria, AWOLOWO in Western Nigeria, and AHMADU BELLO in Northern Nigeria.

Still in 1954 the N.C.N.C. government of the Eastern Region introduced the adult suffrage, ended the underprivileged state of certain tribes, and enforced a number of economic, social and educational reforms.

#### *New Parties*

New parties were formed in Nigeria in the years 1953 and 1954.

The first was an expressly political organization, the Middle Belt People's Party, with the same programme as the Middle Zone League.

In June 1954 the radical-minded youths of the Kanuri tribe in the Northern Region (members of the Bornu Youth Improvement Association who were joined also by young Kanuri intellectuals withdrawn from the Northern People's Congress) formed the Bornu Youth Movement, which demanded democratization of the established tribal authorities.

<sup>1</sup> See G. PADMORE, *Panaficanism or Communism*, pp. 369-371; *The Times*, Oct. 15, 1954.



### *Federal Elections in 1954 and the New Federal Government*

Towards the end of 1954 it came to the first federal elections, as a result of which the N.C.N.C. obtained 56 seats, the Action Group (in an election bloc with the United National Independence Party) 27, the Northern People's Party 79, and the Kamerun National Congress (K.N.C.) 6 seats.

After the elections the first federal government was formed. Since none of the parties gained the absolute majority in the elections, the Governor-General had to take into account the proposals of the parties which obtained the majority in the several Regions. Accordingly, AZIKIWE's N.C.N.C., which polled the majority of the votes in both Eastern and Western Nigeria, received six ministerial seats, the Northern People's Party obtained three and the K.N.C. one. In these circumstances the Action Group was forced into opposition in the Federal Parliament.

In the 1956 election of the Regional Houses of Assembly the N.C.N.C. again won in Eastern Nigeria, but it failed to obtain the majority and take over from the Action Group in the Western Region. Also to no avail were the efforts of the Northern opposition parties (before the election the N.P.U. made a pact with the Bornu Youth Movement, and the two opposition groups of the Middle Belt — the Middle Zone League and the Middle Belt People's Party — merged into the United Middle Belt Congress). More than 80 per cent of all seats (106 out of 131) went to the Northern People's Congress of BALEWA.

### *The Foster-Sitton Commission*

In 1956, in the House of Representatives AZIKIWE was faced with the charge of financial abuses, of having used funds of the Eastern regional government to invest in the African Continental Bank, in which he had interests. A commission of inquiry was set up, which, in its report published in January 1957, stated that AZIKIWE had committed incorrect acts. The N.C.N.C. Executive Committee, though disagreeing with the findings of the commission, advised AZIKIWE to transfer his interests in the bank to the government of Eastern Nigeria. Which he did. Shortly afterwards the Eastern Region legislature was dissolved and new elections were called. At the elections held in March 1957 AZIKIWE and his party won a sweeping victory; nevertheless, some members of the party demanded his dismissal. At the party congress in April 1957 it came to stormy debates, during which AZIKIWE sharply criticized a group of the party, first of all National President MBADIVE, the Federal Minister of Commerce, and BALOGUN, the general secretary of the party.

### *The March 1957 Resolution of the Federal Parliament*

In March 1957 one of the Action Group leaders, S. K. AKINTOLA, presented a motion to the legislature: the House should instruct the delegates of Nigeria to the forthcoming Constitutional Conference to do everything possible to obtain self-government for the Federation of Nigeria in 1957. N.C.N.C. representative JAJA WACHUKU moved an amendment: they should demand not self-government in 1957, but independence within the British Commonwealth by 1959. In order to enable all delegates to represent the same view, AKINTOLA agreed to the amendment on behalf of his

party. BALEWA, the N.P.C. leader, also agreed. This is how it was possible for the three sides to arrive at an agreement at last on the most essential issue of their national policy — the date of accession to independence.

### *Constitutional Conference in May 1957*

The Constitutional Conference met at London in May 1957. Agreement was reached on a number of issues. Eastern and Western Nigeria obtained regional self-government. (Representatives of the Northern Region, claiming that they did not feel ready for self-government, thought it better to defer its introduction until 1959. The real motive was obviously that the Northern People's Congress did not see its advantage secured over the opposition parties — the Northern Progressive Union and the Action Group.)

It was agreed also that the federal government would be headed by an African Prime Minister, and that the Federal Ministers who were ex-officio members of the Executive Council would be replaced by Africans, but that the Governor-General would continue to preside over the government with unchanged powers.

Uniform and general suffrage was introduced in the federal elections, but in Northern Nigeria the right to vote was granted to men only.

The Regional Executive Councils also came to be headed by a Premier each, and in the new composition the unofficial members were the majority. The number of the Regional House of Assembly members was increased.

The Nigerian parties did not succeed in putting across their unanimous demand that their country become independent in 1959, but they managed to obtain a promise from the British government: after the forthcoming federal elections, if they would still demand independence by 1960, the British government would fix the date.

Since there was no agreement on a number of questions (the national minorities,<sup>1</sup> the police, the federal constituencies, distribution of the state revenue between the Federation and the Regions), the Conference was adjourned after a month, while committees were set up to consider the undecided questions until the Constitutional Conference to be convened in September 1958 to discuss and decide those issues on the basis of the committee reports.

### *Formation of the Federal Government*

In accordance with the resolution of the 1957 Constitutional Conference, the Eastern and Western Regions obtained self-government, and in September 1957 the new federal government was formed, for the first time under an African Prime Minister. Upon the recommendation of the Governor-General, the Queen appointed to that office BALEWA as leader of the N.P.C., the party having the largest number of seats in the legislature. To secure a uniform stand of the three great parties in the further struggle to be waged for independence, BALEWA included in his cabinet, besides

<sup>1</sup> Northern Nigeria is preponderantly inhabited by Hausa tribes, Eastern Nigeria by Ibos and Western Nigeria by Yorubas. In addition there live in all three Regions numerous different tribal groups, many of which vindicated the right of forming separate independent Regions (states). On the other hand, Western Nigeria raised the demand that the Yoruba-inhabited areas of Northern Nigeria be annexed to the Western Region.



members of the N.C.N.C. as his party's coalition partner, also a few members of the Action Group.

The failure of the Conference to have a date fixed for independence induced the three parties to seek co-operation and take a uniform position in the question of independence. Overcoming its reluctance, Northern Nigeria announced its claim to self-government by March 1959 just as the two Regions of the South. The three parties agreed that the proclamation of independence should be urged to take place on April 2, 1960.

### *Split in the N.C.N.C.*

At the N.C.N.C. conference held in October 1957 AZIKIWE managed to obtain power to appoint and dismiss party functionaries. Making use of this power, he removed MBADIVE and BALOGUN from their party functions. Thereupon the removed leaders submitted a proposal, signed by 31 influential party members, for AZIKIWE's dismissal. However, AZIKIWE achieved the expulsion of his opponents from the party. The expelled functionaries formed a separate group (N.C.N.C. Reform Commission) and continued campaigning for forcing AZIKIWE to resign. After several months of verbal duels and mutual accusations AZIKIWE gained the upper hand. In July 1958 the expelled politicians formed the Democratic Party of Nigeria and the Cameroons.

### *Constitutional Conference in September 1958*

The Constitutional Conference reconvened in September 1958 and discussed the reports of the committee set up by the 1957 Conference. As a result, agreement was reached on a number of unsettled problems, namely: (1) the national minorities (the arrangement consisted in setting aside for further consideration the claims to the formation of new Regions and to frontier rectifications); (2) the police problem (it was decided to establish a single federal police under a superintendent answerable to the federal government and to place recruitment under the control of the regional government); (3) the distribution of power functions between the federal government and the regional governments, etc.

The British Foreign Secretary was unwilling to accept the date of independence as demanded by the Nigerian parties (April 2, 1960), but gave his consent to fixing the date for October 1, 1960.

### *Pre-election Party Struggles*

Before the federal elections called for December 12, 1959, the parties were conducting nationwide propaganda. Agitators were roving the country on bicycle, motorcycle or by car, issued and distributed manifestoes, organized nominating meetings, etc. Especially vigorous propaganda was displayed by the Action Group, which tried hard to secure not only the entire Western Region electorate, whose majority was already backing the Action Group, but also the greater part of the voters of Northern and Eastern Nigeria. During the campaign they used also airplanes and helicopters both to carry the party leaders and canvassers and to drop propaganda materials.

In matters of foreign policy the Northern People's Congress and the Action Group openly proclaimed their intention of taking orientation for the Western capitalist powers, Britain and the United States, while the N.C.N.C. dissociated itself from both power blocs. As regards the relations between West African countries, the Northern People's Congress was categorically set against their union; the N.C.N.C. voiced the necessity of good neighbourly relations with all independent African states and the territories still under colonial rule, while the Action Group first proclaimed that the West African countries needed co-operation but that their union was a matter of the distant future; later, however, changing its position, it made propaganda expressly for the creation of a union of the West African countries. In the first half of 1959 AWOLowo still called the idea of African union an unrealistic dream and said that it would take the African states at least a hundred years to unite in any form whatever, and that he and his party were interested only in the economic co-operation of those countries. Nevertheless, on November 25, 1959, he issued a statement proposing the formation of a "West African Union" by amalgamating not less than twenty African territories (Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Sierra Leone, Senegal, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Dahomey, Niger, Upper Volta, Gabon, French Congo, Ubangi-Shari, Chad, British Cameroons, French Cameroon, Belgian Congo, Portuguese Guinea, Spanish Guinea, Liberia). The statement claimed that the former British colonies might remain within the British Commonwealth, and the former French colonies in the French Community. It stressed notably:

"A powerful, progressive West African Union would wield such influence in Africa that it would accelerate the achievement of freedom for all other African peoples . . . It would be an inspiration to all other Negroes outside Africa, and a place which they could look up to with pride."

In the line of internal politics the N.C.N.C. and the Action Group, as advocates of the rising African bourgeoisie, urged the democratization of the country and promised to conduct propaganda observing respect for the "traditional institutions" and the interests of the Northern feudal elements represented by the Northern People's Congress.

As to the problems of economic and cultural development, the Northern People's Congress emphasized the need for financial and technical assistance from abroad, urged the training of African specialists for the government apparatus and the industries, and for this purpose it pressed for the development of higher education. It proposed also the harmonization of economic planning by the regional governments and the drafting of plans for economic co-operation with the countries of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

In its election manifesto the N.C.N.C. placed the greatest emphasis on the need to increase the inflow of capital: open the door to foreign capital investment projects and promote the business undertakings of African capitalists, support the entrepreneurs, notably, by lowering the taxes and customs tariffs and by introducing measures to aid all domestic business interests. The manifesto stressed that the party guaranteed the security of all British shops, trading firms, industrial and mining enterprises, insurance and shipping companies that had been in existence before the proclamation of independence. The party took a stand for introduction of state control over industry and trade but it also gave the foreign and domestic capitalists the assurance that it intended to institute no kind of nationalization. At the same time it promised to grant tax exemptions and similar benefits to both African and foreign planters and exporters.

The Action Group concentrated its election propaganda mainly on the problems of economic development. It emphasized the importance of industrialization — partic-



ularly the growth of the chemical, mining, paper and food industries — and demand ed better exploitation of the mineral resources, and the organization of the training of African economic, planning, industrial, financial, technical and agricultural specialists. It proposed that twelve per cent of the national income be spent on investment in the productive sectors which yielded the best and quickest profits, and that the government shape its financial policy to encourage and reward — mainly African — enterprising businessmen, while imposing appropriate taxes to increase the state revenue as much as possible. For this end it proposed the setting up of a federal development board with various technical subcommittees which would have the primary task of preparing a five-year development plan still before accession to independence.

Characteristically enough, in its manifesto issued immediately before the elections, the N.C.N.C. urged the voters to support the party by making reference to the merits of AZIKIWE, highlighting his activities in organizing the Youth Movement and the Freedom Movement in the past twenty years and the persecution he had suffered during that time. On the other side, the Action Group, referring to the higher standard of living of the population of Western Nigeria, accused the N.C.N.C. and the Northern People's Congress of having failed to keep the promises they had made to the peoples of Eastern and Northern Nigeria, respectively; it called upon the electorate of the whole of Nigeria not to vote for those who only were promising, but to give the vote to the Action Group which was able and ready to keep its word, as it had already proved in Western Nigeria. It referred, for example, to the fact that between 1953 and 1959 the number of secondary-school children had risen from 9,000 to 65,000, that there was considerable improvement in agriculture and transportation, and the revenue of the Region had risen from £ 5.4 million to £ 18.5 million a year.

#### *Federal Elections in 1959*

The federal elections were held in December 1959. The Northern People's Congress won 148 seats, while the N.C.N.C. (in an electoral bloc with the N.P.U.) obtained 88, and the Action Group 75 seats. Since none of the parties obtained the absolute majority, the new federal government had again to be a coalition. If the two great southern parties (the N.C.N.C. and the Action Group) had entered into a coalition to form the government, they could have forced the N.P.U. into opposition. Their leaders (AZIKIWE and AWOLowo) were inclined to this step, but their effort was frustrated by the resistance of some N.C.N.C. members (including former cabinet ministers); as a matter of fact, the withdrawal of these members would have thrown out the 15-vote lead of the proposed coalition. In these circumstances the N.C.N.C., to secure its access to power, entered into a league with the N.P.U. This is how the coalition government was formed with the former Federal Prime Minister, ALHADJI ABUBAKAR BALEWA, at its head. Nine of the 16 portfolios were held by the N.P.U., seven by the N.C.N.C. AZIKIWE himself accepted no ministerial seat, instead he became President of the new Senate.

#### *The Railwaymen's Demonstration in December 1959*

In December 1959 ten thousand Nigerian unionized railwaymen organized a protest demonstration at Lagos against the European-owned railway companies because of the low wages. The more than 200-strong police force dispatched against them

was received with sticks and a barrage of stones and bottles, whereupon the police used tear gas and thus dispersed the demonstrators. But the crowd soon reassembled, and the police put them to flight only after a half-hour street fighting. The clash left 2 dead and 37 wounded. The police arrested 168 demonstrators.

#### *Preparation for Independence*

Immediately after the elections BALEWA announced to the press that Nigeria wished to remain within the British Commonwealth and was seeking close relations with the United States. He said that the proposed West African Union was out of place for the time being, but there was a need for mutual understanding and co-operation among the countries of West Africa.

In mid-January 1960 British Prime Minister MACMILLAN while touring Africa visited Nigeria, where he was given a cordial welcome. In his speech at the Lagos airport BALEWA thanked the British Premier for the Constitutional Conferences held at London in preparation of Nigerian independence and protested the loyalty of his government. Two days later, on January 13, after a joint sitting of both Houses of the Federal Parliament held in honour of the British Prime Minister, BALEWA gave a news conference, where the reporters asked him questions chiefly concerning his position with regard to the unification of the countries of West Africa and the issue of South Africa. In his reply BALEWA stated that his government wished to maintain friendly relations and co-operate with all African countries, but at the same time he categorically refused the plan of Premier KWAME NKRUMAH of Ghana for a union of West African countries. He spoke reprovingly of the racist policy of the South African government, declaring that by its policy the VERWOERD administration discredited the British Commonwealth, and unless it changed policy, it had better go and leave the Commonwealth. Yet he stressed at the same time that the resolutions censuring South Africa were of no avail, they served only to empoison the situation.

A similar opinion was expressed by the Premier of the Western Region, AKINTOLA, on February 15. In his statement he rejected the plan of a "United States of Africa" and voiced the view that the African countries must strive to create an organization similar to the British Commonwealth of Nations. Also he denounced as dangerous to Nigeria the view adopted by the Accra Conference of African states regarding democracy and the one-party system. He emphasized that the African countries must not be dictated what kind of democracy to introduce. On his part, he was for the multi-party system. His position was close to that of BALEWA also regarding the South African problem which he thought must be approached with great circumspection, with full knowledge of the local conditions, and therefore he believed Nigeria ought to send an envoy to South Africa to begin with.

It was made known on February 23 that the British Governor-General had relinquished the matters of defence to the federal government and the Ministry of Defence would be taken over by Prime Minister BALEWA.

Colonial Secretary MACLEOD announced in the House of Commons on March 10 that the British government still in March would present the Nigeria independence bill to come into force on October 1, and that Great Britain together with the other Commonwealth countries would support the admission of the new independent state to the British Commonwealth.

Late in March anti-tax demonstrations took place and lasted for days in the town of Lafia and the surrounding villages in the Northern Region. The local police arrested



94 persons, but could not put a stop to the riot and called the federal police for help. The federal police came to rescue and opened fire on the crowd. As a result, eight demonstrators were killed in the village of Obi 22 miles away from Lafia.

In the first half of 1960 there was some ferment within the Youth Movement, mainly among the young intellectuals (with the students of the University College of Ibadan in the lead). Already in January 1960, during MACMILLAN's visit, several student demonstrations were staged against the colonial policies of the British government, notably its policy concerning the Central African Federation. The oppositionist mood of the youth was bolstered during the spring months when the authorities arrested a large number of workers who demonstrated claiming higher wages. The youth became still more set against the government when the latter in May signed a military treaty with the British government. The young leaders of the opposition drafted a Youth Charter and sent copies of it to various social and sports clubs, cultural societies, schools and colleges. The draft called upon the Nigerian youth to take action, it convened a congress in Ibadan, which formed a National Youth Council to unite all youth organizations of the country. However, the British Governor-General, by undertaking to sponsor the congress, managed to blur the antigovernment complexion of the movement and prevent it from developing into a new opposition party.

In the middle of May BALEWA had talks in London with the British government. A definitive arrangement was worked out under which Nigeria should become independent on October 1. On May 18 an agreement was signed by which the British government undertook to grant a loan of £ 12 million (\$33 million) to Nigeria on the day of its accession to independence. Before his return from London BALEWA said at a press conference that there would be no military bases in Nigeria, and he ruled out the possibility of spy planes taking off from Nigerian soil.

The coalition government of the Federation of Nigeria was set against France's nuclear explosions in the Sahara and was in favour of boycotting South African products, but at the same time it took a guarded attitude in the question of African unity. At the Addis Ababa Conference of independent African states in July 1960 the Nigerian government supported the proposal of President TUBMAN of Liberia who urged, instead of the creation of all-African unity, merely the establishment of a loose association of the countries of West Africa.

#### *Disturbances in July–September 1960*

In the months preceding accession to independence, the Northern Region was the scene of bloody events.

Early in July heavy clashes took place in the town of Shagamu between followers of the Northern People's Congress and the Action Group, who rushed with knives at one another. The toll amounted to four dead and several injured. The riot was followed by twenty arrests. The police could neither identify the dead nor state the number of those wounded.

At the beginning of August it was in another Northern Nigerian town, Maiduguri, that it came to armed clashes between supporters of the Northern People's Congress and the opposition Bornu Youth Movement. The event resulted in three dead and twelve seriously wounded. A number of arrests were made. The clashes flared up a few days later: on August 11 a mass demonstration took place in front of the court building where thirty-two of the arrested persons awaited conviction. On that

occasion the Africans used knives, sticks, arrows and broken glass. The fighting produced ten dead.

In the two weeks immediately preceding the proclamation of independence particularly serious disturbances took place in two districts (Tiv and Wukari) of Benue province in the Northern Region. Armed clashes, house-burnings and hold-ups occurred day after day. In the estimate of the police about 80,000 people participated in the riots. In these circumstances the Northern Nigerian police proved inefficient, so a federal police reinforcement of 700 men were sent to their aid. Police reports spoke of 8 to 14 dead and eighty-odd wounded. On the other hand, the *Lagos Daily Express* reported 31 dead and 450 seriously wounded and over 1,500 persons having become homeless as a result of fires. According to another source more than 30 bodies were found in the Tiv district alone; and the principal locality of the Wukari district, Zaki Bian, was entirely consumed by fire. In the course of two weeks 4,555 people were arrested and over 2,500 convicted of "rioting", arson, robbery and destruction of property. Southern Nigerians being employed in Benue province left their jobs *en masse* and returned to their native land. The authorities started to evacuate the families of British colonial officials. The programme of Princess ALEXANDRA, who was scheduled to visit this part of the country during the independence celebration, had to be changed.

The British colonial authorities, being unable or unwilling to recognize the political nature of the disorders, tried to explain the events by pointing to the bitter strifes between the tribes. The Northern People's Congress which was in power in Northern Nigeria, and which wielded the majority also in the federal government, accused the Action Group of having sparked off the disturbances, while the Action Group put the blame on the Northern People's Congress and its government. No doubt the tribal strifes also were responsible for the happenings, but the main cause — as was pointed out by AWOLOWO, the Action Group leader — lay certainly in the fact that the non-Muslim peoples living in the south of the Northern Region were driven to despair by the repressive rule of the Muslim Ministers and feudal despots. In essence the conflict broke out between those giving voice to this desperation (followers of the Action Group), on the one hand, and those being influenced and supported by the feudal leaders, on the other.

#### *Independent Nigeria*

In mid-September AZIKIWE went to London to confer with British government representatives on the details of the forthcoming proclamation of independence. During his stay in London he gave a dinner to newspapermen on September 19. There he rose to speak and pledged the gratitude of all Nigerians to Great Britain "for the imperishable tradition of law and respect for human dignity", and expressed his conviction that transition to independence would go without a hitch.

The first Federal Commissioner of Nigeria arrived in London at the same time as AZIKIWE. He made a similar statement and announced that Nigeria, at the request of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, decided to send troops to the Congo next October.

On September 23 in Lagos BALEWA gave a press interview in which he said that Nigeria wanted to pursue a neutral and flexible foreign policy between East and West, to have a free hand to follow an external policy advantageous to Nigeria. How that "neutrality" and "flexibility" should be understood was made clear at



once, when he in the same breath stressed that the Nigerian government could not agree with the idea that assistance to the developing countries should be provided only through the United Nations. He stated also that his government had decided to accept from Israel a seven-year loan of \$8.5 million. At the same time he spoke in unfavourable terms about NKRUMAH and his policies.

On September 23 Prime Minister MACMILLAN cabled the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria confirming their agreement on the recognition of Nigeria as a member of the Commonwealth as of October 1, 1960.

The proclamation of independence took place on October 1, with all solemnity, in the presence of Princess ALEXANDRA of Kent as representative of Queen ELIZABETH of England, further 50,000 Nigerians, among them the Sultan of Northern Nigeria and hundreds of chiefs.

On the eve of the independence festivities BALEWA reshuffled and completed his government. He announced that he would retain the functions of Minister for External Affairs and Minister of Nationalities, and appointed MUHAMMAD RIBADU, until then Minister for the Federal territory of Lagos, to be Minister of Defence and made the former President of the Federal Parliament, JAJA WACHUKU, Minister of Economic Affairs.

In his festive address BALEWA expressed his compliments to Queen ELIZABETH as "Queen of Nigeria" and thanked the British government for having prepared Nigeria for independence, and gave assurance of Nigeria remaining a loyal member of the British Commonwealth.

He emphasized that the country had acceded to independence in a peaceful way — a unique experience, he said, in the annals of history.

The United States was represented by Governor ROCKEFELLER of New York, who, while declaring that the U.S. Government did not "expect the newly independent nations like Nigeria to stand besides the United States as a kind of active and committed ally in all struggles and conflicts that today are dividing the world", stressed at the same time that the United States of America wished to build stronger and closer relations with independent Nigeria. The same attitude was reflected in an editorial of the *New York Times* on October 1: "Nigeria can be expected to maintain a friendly position toward the democratic world of which she herself is now a full-fledged member." It is also stated in the editorial that, "Unless all signs fail, Nigeria will exert a much needed stabilizing influence in African affairs." We could read the same thought in a Nigerian report published by the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* dating from the last days of September. (Already two months earlier, towards the end of July, when the Federal Minister of Information, BENSON, visited Switzerland, the NZZ reporter inferred from a talk with him that "from the political point of view Nigeria seems to be calm and very much consolidated".) It is characteristic, however, that on October 2, when the paper reported on the Lagos festivities, the correspondent expressed his concern that, as long as the country was unable to liquidate its economic backwardness, it would be "internally instable".

The events of subsequent years have shown the latter prediction to come true.

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#### CHAPTER V

#### SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone is in many respects a peculiar country, a typical example of how the British colonizers applied in practice the principle of "divide and rule". The country consisted of two separate administrative units; the part situated along the coast, inhabited mostly by Creoles, was the Colony proper under the direct administration of the colonial authorities, while the larger part extending inland, called the Protectorate, was administered by the local chiefs in the pay of the British authorities; the chiefs collected the taxes and provided gratuitous labour. A characteristic event occurred in Bombali, causing the Sierra Leone Youth League to make a complaint to the Secretary of State for the Colonies: On April 13, 1948, the local paramount chief in Bombali ordered a number of men and women of his tribe arrested, flogged and put in jail for having refused to work upon the order of the District Commissioner.<sup>1</sup>

Sierra Leone typified the domination of monopoly capital. Until the late thirties it was a characteristic example of countries where the imperialists applied the system of monoculture: almost all exports consisted of palm kernels and palm oil under the monopoly of the British Unilever Africa Company. In the thirties, as a consequence of the discovery of iron ore deposits and diamond fields, two new monopoly companies made their appearance in Sierra Leone: the Sierra Leone Development Company, as concessionary of iron ore extraction, and the Sierra Leone Selection Trust, controlling the diamond mines. Late in the thirties about two-thirds of the exports from Sierra Leone consisted of iron ore and diamonds. In 1949 the colonial administration worked out a plan for the economic development of Sierra Leone, the so-called CHILDS plan, intended for the six years following 1948 to increase the exports of palm kernels by about 50 per cent and coffee, cocoa and piassava by 100 per cent. The plan failed, however; even ten years, not six, after the start of the plan, palm kernel exports rather decreased than increased in comparison to 1948 (57,530 tons in 1959 against 66,431 tons in 1948). Though cocoa and piassava exports rose twofold and coffee exports tenfold (in weight), yet the aggregate value of those three products amounted only to one tenth of the value of total exports, while palm kernels made up only one sixth, iron ore one quarter, and diamonds more than half of the value of total exports.

The gross value of exports in 1959 was £18,897,000, of which £9,305,539 came from diamonds and £4,096,470 from iron ore.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> G. PADMORE, *Africa: Britain's Third Empire*, London, 1949, p. 121.

<sup>2</sup> *Sierra Leone: The Making of a Nation*, London, 1960.



Major agricultural exports from Sierra Leone

	1948		Targets for 1954 in the Childs plan		1959	
	tons	£	tons	£	tons	£
Palm kernels	66,431	1,744,591	100,000	3,120,000	57,530	3,175,621
Coffee	347	73,682	700	147,000	4,931	984,858
Cocoa	1,379	102,941	3,000	220,000	2,617	701,585
Piassava	2,160	88,345	4,000	277,000	5,423	237,333

Sierra Leone was also a telling example to the effect that the land policy applied by the British imperialists in their West African possessions at the beginning of the century (the land was left to the Africans) had been nothing else but tactics to be shifted only later. Before World War II, the Sierra Leone colonial administration brought large expanses of tribal land under its control. It "leased" them to privileged capitalist companies which paid in return a low rent to the tribes (a yearly 2 to 20 shillings per acre). In September 1947 the administration submitted to the Native Advisory Council a draft "Protectorate (Acquisition of Land) Ordinance", under which large areas of land would have passed into government property as "Crown Lands". The plan gave rise to so vehement indignation and protests not only in the broad masses of the African population, but also among the chiefs, that the Legislative Council unanimously rejected it. The protest of Africans was given expression by a Freetown lawyer, ALBERT MARGAI<sup>1</sup> (who later became Prime Minister), in a newspaper article in the following terms:

"After grasping even faintly the aims and objectives of the Bill, we naturally ask ourselves the following questions. Can we continue to repose any confidence in Britain? What has become of the much vaunted principles of democracy and trusteeship? Is this a foretaste of what a Labour Government has in store for us? My answers to such questions are as follows:

"No greater deception can exist in the mind of any intelligent African at present than to entertain the faintest belief in Britain's good intentions for the African colonies. British ideology is democracy at home, dictatorship in the colonies. A change of Government is not intended to effect British Colonial Policy."<sup>2</sup>

The workers and peasants of Sierra Leone had militant experiences and traditions looking back to several decades,<sup>3</sup> but until the end of World War II they had no organized political party to wage a conscious struggle for the liquidation of colonial oppression, for the attainment of independence. In Sierra Leone, just as in most

<sup>1</sup> ALBERT MICHAEL MARGAI, brother of MILTON MARGAI, was born at Gbamgbatok in 1910. He was educated at the Roman Catholic school of Bonthe and the St. Edward school of Freetown. From 1932 to 1944 he was employed first as a male nurse and later as a druggist. From 1944 to 1948 he studied law in London. In 1948 he returned to Sierra Leone, where he served on a district council and, from 1949, in the Protectorate Assembly. He was an original member of the Sierra Leone People's Party. In 1951 he was elected to the Legislative Council as a member of the Protectorate Assembly. In 1953 he was appointed Minister of Education, Welfare and Local Government.

<sup>2</sup> PADMORE, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

<sup>3</sup> As for the role of trade unions and the strike movement, see Vol. II, p. 233; the Kontofili uprising, Vol. II, p. 240; the role of WALLACE JOHNSON and the West African Youth League, Vol. II, p. 243.

African countries, the fight for independence did not start until after the end of World War II.

Immediately after the war's end there formed in Freetown a number of political organizations which, while calling themselves parties, were in reality nothing but small groups concerned with political questions (Freetown People's Party, National Council of Sierra Leone, Sierra Leone Democratic Party, etc.). One major political organization was active in the Protectorate, the Sierra Leone Organization Society, founded in 1946 by MILTON MARGAI<sup>1</sup> backed by the chiefs, with the purpose of urging the improvement by constitutional means of the political and economic conditions of the population of the Protectorate.

In 1947 the colonial administration introduced a new Constitution. The "constitutional reform" amounted to a slight change in the composition of the Legislative Council. Until then the Council had consisted of twelve official and nine "unofficial" members; three of the latter, representing foreign commercial and other capitalist interests in the Colony, were nominated by the Governor, another three, called to represent the population of the "Protectorate", were chosen by the chiefs from their own number, and three were elected by Africans to represent the Coast population, two of them for Freetown and one for the provinces (franchise was subject to property qualifications). Under the 1947 Constitution the number of ex-officio members was reduced from 12 to 8, and that of the "unofficial" members representing the Protectorate was raised from 3 to 9. The British government presented this change as a great democratic reform, establishing a nearly two-thirds majority of the unofficial members of the Legislative Council (15 unofficial against 8 official members). Of course that was all eye-wash, since the representatives of the Protectorate, the chiefs dependent on the colonial administration just like the members representing commercial interests and appointed by the Governor, were all the time obedient tools of the colonial government.

As this deceptive "reform" roused indignation among the population of the "Colony", the Governor in 1948 carried out a complementary "reform"; he raised the number of elected members from 3 to 7 and that of the chiefs representing the Protectorate from 9 to 13. This made the reform appear still more democratic (23 unofficial against 8 official members), but in reality it ensured the administration a larger (four-fifths) majority than before (8 ex-officio members, 3 nominees and 13 against 7 elected members).

In April 1951 the Legislative Council enacted this reform, subject to some modifications, as Sierra Leone's Constitution. The number of unofficial members of the Legislative Council was raised to 23, and that of ex-officio members reduced to seven. Twenty-one of the 23 unofficial members were elected representatives: the Colony henceforth elected 7 members instead of 3, and the Protectorate, which had had no elected representatives before, elected 14 members, but not by direct vote (12 through the district councils and 2 through the Protectorate Assembly), meaning in reality that these 14 "elected" members also were nominated by the chiefs. The Governor appointed the two unofficial members from among the European merchants. The Governor remained President of the Legislative Council, and he appointed the Vice-President (not from among the Council members). The Executive Council, in which

<sup>1</sup> MILTON AUGUSTUS MARGAI, son of a trader of the Mende tribe, was born in the village of Gbamgbatok of the Protectorate (near Bonthe) in December 1895. He went to the Protestant mission school of Bonthe, studied at the Albert Academy of Freetown and at Fourah Bay College, then took his medical degree at Durham University (1926). For a while he was a medical practitioner, and later became a doctor in the colonial administration.



until then 5 official and 3 unofficial members had held seats (besides the Governor as President), now consisted (in addition to the Governor) of 4 ex-officio and of at least 4 unofficial members nominated by the Governor from the elected members of the Legislative Council. (Though in 1953 the Governor appointed 5 unofficial members — who thus had a formal majority — this was entirely irrelevant because the Governor still had the decisive say in the Executive Council, as he included in it only such Legco members whom he knew to be his blind tools.)

The elections to the new Legislative Council were held in November 1951. Before the elections two political parties were formed. One of them, the Sierra Leone People's Party (S.L.P.P.), was constituted, under the leadership of MILTON MARGAI, by the merger of the Sierra Leone Organization Society with the Freetown People's Party of the Coast region. The other party also emerged as a fusion, under BANKOLE BRIGHT and WALLACE JOHNSON, of several groups, namely the National Council of Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Democratic Party, and a few minor political parties and groups, including those of ex-members of the West African Youth League which had been banned during the war. At the elections the People's Party obtained only one of the seven seats reserved for the Coast, and the National Council gained four. Nevertheless the former had a majority, since it was joined in the Legislative Council by the 14 chiefs indirectly elected for the Protectorate.

Early in 1952 the National Council of Sierra Leone sent to London a delegation to present the British government a petition requesting introduction of a system of election through direct vote in the Protectorate, too. In support of their request they argued that the members elected by the district councils and the Protectorate Assembly represented not the real will of the people but the power interests of the chiefs, and that the majority of the chiefs were subservient to the colonial administration.

On the question of the relationship between the Colony and the Protectorate, however, opinions differed also within the National Council itself. Originally the National Council was formed to function as a national party, but its influence was limited to the Coast. When in 1952 it became clear that BANKOLE BRIGHT wished also in the future, to rely on the population of the Coast, because he feared that the participation of the Protectorate population in political life would impair the civilized standards of life of the Coast population, WALLACE JOHNSON broke with him and resigned from the party.

In December 1952 the Legislative Council passed a resolution, under which the unofficial members of the Executive Council (who had thus far played an entirely passive role) should receive the title and responsibility of Ministers, each of them being answerable for a specific department of the administration. This was implemented by an ordinance issued in April 1953: each of the five unofficial Executive Council members (who were all members of the Legislative Council, too) took over a department of the colonial administration.

Two further steps were taken in 1954. The leader of the majority party, MILTON MARGAI, who since April 1953 had held the office of Minister of Agriculture and Health, became head of government as "Chief Minister", and the Governor — on the recommendation of the Legislative Council — appointed a commission to draw up the electoral reform.

The year 1955 brought a change in the political life of Sierra Leone. In February 1955 the largest trade union of the country, the Artisans and General Workers Union (which had about 10,000 members and embraced all workers who had no specialized

unions), went on strike demanding a wage increase.<sup>1</sup> Upon the appeal of the strikers, other unionized workers (railwaymen, dockworkers, public utility and shop workers) joined in the strike, thus giving it a political character. The strike lasted five days and completely paralyzed business life in Freetown. The strikers went to the streets and organized protest demonstrations. The authorities called out the police and soldiers against the protesters. It came to street battles, in which about a hundred people were killed and several hundred injured.

In the second half of the year the peasantry of the Protectorate got moving, too. In many places, mostly in the western and northern districts, peasant risings took place because of the pressure of taxation and despotism and abusive measures of the chiefs and colonial officials. The "disturbances", in which tens of thousands of peasants took part, were put down by the colonial authorities, just as in Freetown, with the help of the police and troops (casualty figures are not available).

Neither the workers nor the peasants fought in vain. Even the colonial administration drew the lessons from what had happened. The wage and working conditions of workers were somewhat improved, occasional tax reductions were allowed to peasants, and even some of the despotic local chiefs and colonial officials were removed. But, most important of all, the British government had become aware that, if it wanted to keep its economic positions, it had to make some concessions in the political field, too.

The Commission appointed to work out the electoral reform was headed by an English professor of Oxford, BRIAN KEITH-LUCAS. Contributing to its work were representatives of all political parties. In its report submitted in 1955 the Commission proposed that a uniform electoral system be introduced — for both central and local elections — in the Coast region and the Protectorate, and that, for the time being (pending the introduction of the universal suffrage to come in a few years), all adult taxpayers be qualified as voters. The colonial administration accepted the proposal with slight modifications.

A year later the electoral reform was followed by a reform of the Legislative Council. It was discussed and adopted by the Council in July 1956 after consultations with the political parties and the government authorities, and was approved by the British Colonial Secretary in October 1956. Under this new "Constitution" the 32-member Legislative Council was superseded by a House of Representatives consisting of 57 members, of whom 39 were elected (14 by the constituencies of the Coast and 25 by those of the Protectorate). Besides the members elected through direct vote, there were 12 paramount chiefs elected by the District Councils of the Protectorate; an additional four members were ex officio appointed by the colonial government, and two members with voice but no vote were nominated by the Governor. The House of Representatives itself elected its President, in contrast with the Legislative Council, which had been presided over by the Governor.

At the general parliamentary election held under the new Constitution in May 1957 MILTON MARGAI's People's Party won only 26 of the 39 seats filled through direct vote (that is less than half of all seats); his majority in Parliament was nevertheless secured, since the government party was backed up by the 12 paramount chiefs elected indirectly and by a great part of the Independent members. BANKOLE BRIGHT's National Council gained no seat.

<sup>1</sup> The workers demanded that their starvation wage of 52 cents a day be increased by 21 cents; the employers offered an increase of 3 to 4 cents.



After the 1957 election a part of the People's Party members with ALBERT MARGAI at their head, who were dissatisfied with MILTON MARGAI's moderate policy, demanded that the leader of the party be re-elected after every parliamentary election. ALBERT MARGAI, when he polled 22 votes against MILTON MARGAI's 21, withdrew in favour of his brother, and refused to take part in the newly formed cabinet.

The Governor appointed to the Executive Council MILTON MARGAI as Chief Minister and, upon his recommendation, nine other Ministers.

In 1956 WALLACE JOHNSON and CYRILL ROGERS-WRIGHT formed a new party. In opposition both to the Sierra Leone People's Party, considered as representing the interests of the Protectorate, and to the National Council, which was concerned only with the problems of the Coast, the new party wished to function as a really national party and to unite the populations of the Coast and the Protectorate for the independence struggle. Right after its formation the new party gained great popularity by organizing demonstrations against the tax increases introduced by the chiefs in some districts of the Northern Province. At the 1957 election the party won four seats,<sup>1</sup> thus entering the legislature as a relatively strong opposition party.

A new constitutional reform was implemented in 1958, making this time a change in the Executive Council. After talks with the British Foreign Secretary in London at the end of 1957, the Sierra Leone government had published its draft reform, which was then accepted by the British Parliament and government early in 1958. The new reform came into force in August 1958. The new Executive Council, headed this time by MILTON MARGAI as Prime Minister, consisted solely of Africans — without any ex-officio members — but was still presided over by the Governor. The Ministers (not less than seven by virtue of the law) were appointed by the Governor, on the recommendation of the Prime Minister, from among the elected representatives. (To the previous cabinet the Governor appointed eleven Ministers.) The Executive Council was responsible to the House of Representatives. External affairs, home defence and security matters, the army and police, as well as guidance and control of the colonial administration, remained responsibilities of the Governor, but the law obliged him to ask for the opinion of the Executive Council in all matters and to take into account its suggestions unless these threatened the peace of the country and the smooth work of government. Under the new law the House of Representatives consisted of only 53 members instead of 57, but 51 of them were elected and only two were nominated.

In September 1958, after the entry into force of the Constitution, ALBERT MARGAI and SIAKA STEVENS<sup>2</sup> resigned from the People's Party and formed the People's National Party (P.N.P.). At the October 1959 local elections the new party gained 10 per cent of all seats (33 out of 324).

#### *The London Negotiations in April-May 1960. Sierra Leone's Accession to Independence*

British Secretary of State for the Colonies MACLEOD invited to a "constitutional conference" in London, for April 20, 1960, the government and leaders of the political parties of Sierra Leone. A month before the conference, in March 1960, MILTON

<sup>1</sup> At the general election it gained actually only one seat, but after the Supreme Court invalidated a few election polls, it obtained three more seats at the by-elections.

<sup>2</sup> SIAKA PROBYN STEVENS was born in the Moyamba district of the Protectorate in August 1905. He graduated from the Albert Academy of Freetown. From 1923 to 1930 he was a clerk of the police of Sierra Leone.

MARGAI managed to rally in a United National Front his own government party (S.L.P.P.), the National Council of Sierra Leone representing the Creole population of Freetown and its environs, the People's National Party led by his brother ALBERT and by SIAKA STEVENS, and a few other minor political groups.

At the London conference, which lasted from April 20 to May 4, the Sierra Leone politicians took a unified stand, demanding the granting of independence by December 7, 1960. The British government thought it premature and suggested a much later date. Two weeks' talks ended with a compromise. An agreement was signed, under which Sierra Leone should accede to independence on April 27, 1961, while remaining within the British Commonwealth of Nations; Great Britain would grant the new sovereign state an aid of £7½ million (in form of loans, credits and technical assistance); in exchange Sierra Leone should provide naval and air bases to Britain. It was agreed that the two governments would conduct talks with a view to concluding a "defence treaty".

SIAKA STEVENS refused to sign the agreement, for he considered that its provisions concerning the defence treaty and military bases were incompatible with independence and therefore unacceptable.

Upon their return from London, SIAKA STEVENS and WALLACE JOHNSON resigned from the United National Front and started a campaign demanding new general elections before the country's accession to independence (Election Before Independence Movement — E.B.I.M.).

In July 1960 MILTON MARGAI formed a government, in which he included his brother ALBERT, relying on the coalition of the People's National Party and the United People's Party.

In September 1960 SIAKA STEVENS and WALLACE JOHNSON founded a new opposition party called the All-People's Congress. The new party stood up for limitation of the chiefs' powers and democratization of state administration; it was sharply opposed to MILTON MARGAI's extreme Western orientation, particularly to the military treaty concluded in the meantime, and demanded new general elections before the proclamation of independence. The new party rode to popularity among the patriots dissatisfied with MILTON MARGAI's conservative policies, especially among the young people.

At the local elections held in Freetown in November 1960 the All-People's Congress emerged with victory in three of four districts.

In February 1961 STEVENS went to London and made a last attempt to convince the British government of the necessity of holding new elections before independence. As the British government flatly refused, the All-People's Congress, relying on the trade unions, threatened to organize a general strike and antigovernment demonstrations during the forthcoming celebration of independence. In response to this threat the MARGAI government and the British colonial authority launched a campaign of slander against STEVENS and his party, levelling against them the trumped-up charge that they were backed up in their policy by "foreign powers" (Ghana and Guinea) and even accusing them of being under the influence of Moscow and the Communists.

The All-People's Congress and the United National Front on February 19 held mass rallies in Freetown simultaneously. This led to new clashes, whereupon the government ordered the arrest of fifteen members of the All-People's Congress on the charge of sedition. Early in March the MARGAI government accused STEVENS and JOHNSON also of sedition and conspiracy, and when STEVENS again went to England, the London police, at the request of the MARGAI government, arrested



him and conveyed him back to Freetown, where he was temporarily released on bail.

Ten days before the proclamation of independence the MARGAI government declared the state of emergency throughout the country, and five days later (April 22) STEVENS and eighteen other leaders of his party were arrested and imprisoned.

On the appointed date, April 27, 1961, the country's independence was proclaimed amidst the usual celebrations in the presence of the Earl of Kent representing the Queen, as well as of Presidents TUBMAN of Liberia and BALEWA of Nigeria.

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## CHAPTER VI

### THE GAMBIA

Immediately after the war's end, in 1945, two new political parties were formed in the Gambia: the Democratic Party and the Gambia Muslim Congress. Founders of the former were the Rev. J. C. FAY and E. F. SMALL, then editor of the paper *Gambia Outlook*, the other party was founded by J. M. GARBA JAHUMPA.

Before 1946 both the Legislative Council and the Executive Council consisted of nominated members only. In 1946 the colonial administration introduced a new "constitution", under which the Legislative Council had fourteen members: seven colonial officials and seven unofficial members, one of whom was elected (for the town of Bathurst) and the rest were nominated, one of them to represent the Protectorate. The Executive Council comprised eight members: five colonial officials and three unofficial African members (one of them was an elected member and the other two were appointed members of the Legislative Council). Of course, this constitution satisfied neither the population of Bathurst nor that of the Protectorate, and both parties demanded its revision, but in vain for many years. In 1951, at last, the colonial administration brought some reforms: of the seven unofficial (African) members of the Legislative Council, three were elected instead of one and were at the same time ex-officio members of the Executive Council, and two of them even rated as "Cabinet members" without portfolio.

At the 1951 elections held under the new constitution both the Rev. FAY and JAHUMPA were elected to the Legislative Council. After the elections a Bathurst lawyer, PIERRE N'JIE,<sup>1</sup> who had run for election but failed as an independent candidate, founded the United Party.

In 1954 the British government made further concessions. It agreed that both the Legislative Council and the Executive Council should have a majority of elective members. However, this constitutional reform gave only a semblance of democratic solution. The legislature consisted of five ex-officio members and sixteen unofficial members, two of the latter being, however, nominated by the Governor, and of the fourteen elected members only the four members for Bathurst were elected through universal and direct suffrage by qualified voters over 25 years of age. Ten members were elected through indirect suffrage, seven of them in the Protectorate constitu-

<sup>1</sup> PIERRE SARR N'JIE was born the son of Muslim parents in the Woloff tribe at Bathurst in 1909. He was educated at the local mission, and later he taught at the same school. In 1939 he was converted to Catholicism and entered the colonial administration. At first he worked in the Public Works Department, then became a court clerk. In 1943-1944 he served in the British army in the artillery. He studied law in London from 1944 to 1948 and then became a practising lawyer in the Gambia.



uencies where the chiefs supporting the government had a decisive say at the elections. In this way the government and the chiefs jointly were assured of a two-thirds majority in the Legislative Council (five official and two nominated unofficial members plus seven representatives of the Protectorate). The elected majority of the Executive Council also was a smokescreen, since, while having only five ex-officio members beside seven elected members, the Council was invariably presided over by the Governor, and only two (or at most three) of the elected Executive Council members had ministerial seats in the government; moreover, to each of them was assigned an "advisory committee" formed of leading functionaries of the department nominally under his authority.

At the new elections held in October 1954, FAY and JAHUMPA as well as N'JIE were elected to the legislature now having an elective majority. All three represented Bathurst, and they became also members of the Executive Council as Ministers. N'JIE polled the most of votes among them.

In August 1957 a new political party was born, the Gambia National Party, which, though playing no important role, by its broadcast programmes contributed towards rekindling the political life of the country.

At the Bathurst municipal elections in November 1957, the Gambia Muslim Congress won the majority over N'JIE's United Party; the Gambia National Party gained only one seat.

At the constitutional conference held in November 1958, representatives of the Gambian parties demanded that the number of ministerial seats be increased and the constitution amended. However, the parties did not take a uniform stand. The parties of the "Colony" demanded a 27-member Legislative Council with seven members elected by the population of the Colony, and a Cabinet of Ministers of nine members, as well as (except the Muslim Congress) extension of universal suffrage to the Protectorate, and freedom of activity for the Colony parties in the territory of the Protectorate (expecting to use this freedom to increase their influence among the Protectorate's population). On the other hand, the chiefs representing the Protectorate (as well as the Muslim Congress most of whose members were chiefs) insisted that the suffrage in the Protectorate should also be subject to property qualifications, and that only the first wives of the men qualified as voters should have the right to vote, and demanded for themselves six of the nine ministerial seats. The British government, however, refused all these demands.

In 1959 the British government amended the constitution by extending universal suffrage to everyone over 24 years, and raising the number of the members of the Legislative Council to 34 (four of them being ex-officio members, three appointed by the Governor, and eight elected by the chiefs, twelve by the Protectorate, and seven by the inhabitants of Bathurst). The constitution provided, however, for no increase in the number of the Executive Council members, and the six-member Council continued to be presided over by the Governor.

In 1959, at the initiative of trade-union leader SANJALI BOJANG, the Protectorate People's Society of Bathurst was transformed into the Protectorate People's Party. Soon after its formation the party's leadership was taken over by DAVID JAWARA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> DAVID KAIRABA JAWARA was born of Muslim parents from the Mandingo tribe in the Gambian village of Barajally in 1924. He was educated in Bathurst, first at a Muslim and later at a Methodist school. He was a male nurse in the health department of the colonial administration from 1945 to 1947. In 1947-1948 he studied at the Achimota College of the Gold Coast, and from 1948 to 1952 at Glasgow University, where he took his degree in veterinary medicine.

who made its name changed to the Progressive People's Party, indicating thereby its all-national character, although the party's policies were still concentrated on the interests of the Protectorate.

At the elections held in May 1960 JAWARA's Progressive People's Party won a victory, gaining one seat in Bathurst and nine in the rural districts, while the United Party obtained four seats in Bathurst but only one in the country. The Democratic Party and the Muslim Congress formed an electoral bloc but could not win a single seat. The Gambia National Party, which had run in the election in alliance with the United Party, also returned empty-handed. On the basis of the election results JAWARA and another member of the Progressive People's Party received seats in the government. N'JIE was offered a ministerial post without portfolio, but he refused it.

In November 1960 JAWARA led a delegation to London, where he negotiated with Colonial Secretary MACLEOD, and there was every indication that the British government would appoint him Chief Minister. In January 1961, however, the results of a by-election revealed the decline of the popularity of the Progressive People's Party. The situation was complicated by serious conflicts of the party with some of the chiefs. This induced the British government to choose N'JIE for Chief Minister instead of JAWARA. The appointment was made in March 1961, where upon JAWARA and his associates resigned.

Towards the end of July 1961 the British Colonial Secretary announced that the Gambia would attain independence within a year.

At the parliamentary elections held in May 1962 JAWARA's party, in opposition until then, won 18 of the 32 seats, while only 13 seats went to the United Party of N'JIE, until then Chief Minister, and one seat was gained by the Democratic Congress Party. After the elections the People's Progressive Party formed the government under JAWARA.

On September 14, 1963, the UN Special Committee dealing with the implementation of the colonial declaration adopted a resolution inviting the United Kingdom to grant independence to the Gambia without delay. Subsequently, on October 4, the British government granted the Gambia, if not independence, at least some measure of self-government. (The British retained the handling of external affairs and defence.)

Between July 22 and 30, 1964, a constitutional conference was held in London to decide the future of the Gambia. The conference, which was presided over by Commonwealth and Colonial Secretary SANDYS, was attended by Prime Minister JAWARA and representatives of the opposition parties as well. The opposition's demand for elections before independence was rejected. The conference decided that the Gambia should attain independence on February 18, 1965, but should remain, as an independent state, within the British Commonwealth of Nations. The affairs of the country were to be handled by the formerly constituted Cabinet and the 39-member House of Representatives, but the Queen of England was to remain head of state and be represented in the country by the Governor appointed by Royal order.

The Gambia Independence Bill was adopted by the British Parliament on December 11, 1964, and the country was proclaimed independent on February 17, 1965. The following day, February 18, the Earl of Kent as the Queen's representative

During his student years in London he was president of the African Students Union. In 1953 he was elected to the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, and in 1954 he returned to the Gambia, where he was employed as a veterinary officer in the colonial administration. In 1958 he was appointed Principal Veterinary Officer.



handed Prime Minister JAWARA the insignia of sovereignty with all solemnity in the presence of tens of thousands of people. In his festive address the Prime Minister emphasized that the Gambia was aware of the difficulties lying ahead and felt itself strong enough to safeguard its independence. He said that the government would pursue a progressive policy, a policy of peace, and would accordingly strive for good relations and friendly co-operation with all countries.

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As a consequence of the upsurge of the struggle for independence the problem of the future of the Gambia was brought into the limelight already in the 1950's. The singular geographical and economic position of the country raised the question: Is it possible at all for the Gambia to stand on its feet as an independent state? The country is a narrow strip of land with a population of 320,000 over an area of altogether 10,000 square kilometres, an enclave surrounded — except on the sea coast — by the independent state of Senegal. Twenty per cent of its area is cultivated, 30 per cent is woodland. Its chief produce is groundnuts, giving 95 per cent of its exports. The country has no railway, not a single theatre, cinema, radio station and newspaper. The national revenue per head of the population is £18 a year. In such circumstances it would seem an almost natural solution for the country to unite with Senegal. Unification, however, encounters great difficulties. A serious obstacle is raised by the fact that for many centuries Senegal was under French rule and the Gambia under the domination of British colonizers. Of no less significance than the language barrier is the centuries-old foreign cultural influence.<sup>1</sup> Unification is made still more difficult by differences of an economic character. Senegal belongs to the franc zone, the Gambia to the sterling area. Compared with Senegal, the Gambia is an economically underdeveloped country, the incorporation of which would overburden the budget of Senegal and bring about a decrease in the national income of the Gambia, for it consists mostly of export duties levied on the groundnuts shipped on the Gambia river and of the population's varying earnings from contraband trade.<sup>2</sup>

Both great political parties were in favour of a closer relationship with Senegal, but they saw its feasibility not through amalgamation of the Gambia into Senegal, they thought it was possible by way of a thoroughly prepared federation of the two countries.

Late in 1959 the Legislative Council had discussed the question of union with Senegal or Mali, but the majority had opposed unification. Thereafter the British government made a statement in which it said that the Gambia was not yet in a position to establish formal relations with any independent state.

In the course of 1961 and 1962 the leaders of the country again started talks on the relations between the Gambia and Senegal, and on October 26, 1962, they drafted a joint statement announcing their desire for close co-operation between the two countries. At the same time they requested the United Nations to send experts to study the problem. The UN appointed a commission comprised of a Dutch and a

<sup>1</sup> Proponents of a union, who refer to the example of the Cameroons to belittle this circumstance, fail to take into consideration that, while in the Cameroons the British or French influence prevailed only for a few years, in Senegal and the Gambia it was predominant through several centuries.

<sup>2</sup> This finding of the UN Visiting Mission is confirmed by the fact that the profits made by contraband amounted to more than half a million pounds sterling (\$1,400,000) a year.

Swedish expert who, in their report submitted in 1963 expressed the opinion that the unification of the two countries was desirable, but stated at the same time that the majority of the population of the Gambia was against union.<sup>1</sup>

Immediately before the London conference in July 1964, Prime Minister JAWARA while in Paris declared that the Gambia, upon accession to independence, would conclude a Treaty of Understanding with Senegal.

The matter of relations between the two countries was also on the agenda of the London conference, which took note of the agreements between the two governments on co-ordination of foreign and defence policies. In its communiqué on the conference the British government "noted with satisfaction" the progress made so far and the efforts of the government of the Gambia to establish close co-operation with Senegal.

In the time between the London conference and the Gambia's accession to independence no further essential progress was made on the question of union between the two countries. The question was left to the government of the independent Gambia to solve.

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<sup>1</sup> When SENGHOR, on the occasion of a visit to Bathurst in 1963, delivered a speech at a late evening meeting, all the lights went out — which in the general opinion was not by mere chance.



*British Cameroons**(a) Southern Cameroons*

In 1949 E. M. L. ENDELEY and NERIUS MBILE formed a political organization, the Cameroons National Federation, called to represent a common stand of all tribes at the talks with the UN mission expected to visit the Cameroons.

In 1951 MBILE, who wanted to start a campaign for the union of the British-administered Southern Cameroons with the French colony, withdrew from the Cameroons National Federation and founded another party, the Kamerun United National Congress (K.U.N.C.). At the end of the same year, however, the two parties merged under the name of the Kamerun National Congress (K.N.C.). The new party demanded that the Southern Cameroons be separated from the Eastern Region of Nigeria and administered as part of the Federation of Nigeria. MBILE, who disagreed, in 1953 again withdrew from the party and formed the Kamerun People's Party (K.P.P.).

At the Nigeria Constitutional Conference in 1953 ENDELEY demanded a separate status for the Southern Cameroons but the decision was put off until the forthcoming elections. ENDELEY's party (K.N.C.) won a sweeping victory at the elections, and the regional status was granted to the Southern Cameroons in 1954.

JOHN FONCHA,<sup>1</sup> who disagreed with the Southern Cameroons remaining part of Nigeria, in 1955 resigned from the K.N.C. and founded the Kamerun National Democratic Party (K.N.D.P.) with the purpose of fighting for the union of the Southern Cameroons with the French Cameroon.

At the 1957 election of the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly the K.N.C. again polled the majority of votes, and the government was formed by ENDELEY as Prime Minister. (FONCHA's party entered the legislature as an opposition party with five seats.)

After the election in 1957 another party, the One Kamerun (O.K.) Party, was formed. The branches established in the British Cameroons by the U.P.C. of the

<sup>1</sup> JOHN NGU FONCHA was born in a Catholic family of the Meta tribe at Bamenda in 1916. After finishing his studies at the Bamenda government school and at the Buguma Catholic Mission, he taught in school from 1933 to 1936. In 1936 through 1939 he obtained higher qualifications at the teachers' college of Onitsha. From 1940 to 1954 he was headmaster in Catholic schools, engaging at the same time in political activities. In 1942 he was one of the founders of the Bamenda Catholic Teachers' Union, of which he was president until 1954. Between 1945 and 1954 he was also president of the Bamenda Board of the National Union of Teachers. From 1942 to 1945 he was secretary of the Bamenda branch of the Cameroons Youth League. In 1949 he joined the Cameroons National Federation and organized its Bamenda section. In 1951, together with MBILE, he withdrew from the Federation and also joined the Kamerun United National Congress, then the Kamerun National Congress, of which he remained a member also after MBILE's resignation in 1953.



French Cameroon were banned by the British Governor. In their place came the One Kamerun Party, which led a militant campaign for the union of the British Cameroons with the French trust territory. The party, which was especially active among the poor peasants and handicraftsmen, spread rapidly and formed branches in all towns and in almost all villages.

In 1958 MUNA,<sup>1</sup> Minister of Public Works in the ENDELEY government, wrote an article advocating the union of the British Cameroons with the French trust territory, whereupon ENDELEY relieved him of his office and expelled him from the party. MUNA went over to FONCHA's party and led a violent campaign against the K.N.C.

The K.N.C., weakened by MUNA's withdrawal, began talks with MBILE's Kamerun People's Party, and the two parties formed a bloc for the forthcoming election of the House of Assembly.

At the election held in January 1959 the K.N.D.P. won 14 seats, the K.N.C. and K.P.P. jointly received 12 seats. The new government was formed by the K.N.D.P. under FONCHA as Prime Minister. In May of the same year a member of the FONCHA government (AMEIR BOYA) resigned from the K.N.D.P., thus leaving in the House of Assembly the members of government and opposition in equal numbers (13 to 13). FONCHA remained in power.

Meanwhile, in March 1959, the United Nations had resolved that a plebiscite should decide the future of the Cameroons.

In May 1960 the K.N.C. and the K.P.P. definitively merged as the Cameroon People's National Convention (C.P.N.C.) to join efforts in order that the whole of the British Cameroons might remain in the Federation of Nigeria, and thus in the British Commonwealth of Nations, as a fully self-governing member; or, if this were not possible for the time being, the decision should be put off. On the other hand, the K.N.D.P., which took a stand for union with the Republic of Cameroun, expected the plebiscite to bring a final solution to the issue.

During 1960 the K.N.D.P. and the FONCHA government conducted talks with AHIDJO, Prime Minister of the independent Republic of Cameroun, about a union of the two countries.

Realizing that a decision in favour of joining Nigeria was not to be expected, ENDELEY offered the K.N.D.P. a compromise, demanding that the Southern Cameroons be proclaimed a separate independent state. When FONCHA rejected the proposal, immediately before the plebiscite in January 1961, ENDELEY said that he would appeal to the United Nations proposing a division of the Southern Cameroons: the districts where the majority of the population was in favour of joining the Federation of Nigeria should be annexed to Nigeria, and those voting for the Republic of Cameroun should be incorporated into that Republic.

<sup>1</sup> SOLOMON TABENG MUNA, of the Meta tribe, was born at Mengen-Mbo in the Bamenda district in 1912. He went to the Bamenda elementary school, and after graduating from the Teachers' Training Centre at Kumba he taught in mission schools from 1932 to 1947. In 1949-1950 he finished a one-year course at the Institute of Education of London University, and returned to the Cameroons in 1950. In 1951 he was a foundation member of the K.N.C., and as a member of this party he was elected to Nigeria's Eastern House of Assembly. In the first National Council of Nigeria and the Cameroons (N.C.N.C.) government he was appointed Minister of Public Works in 1951, but resigned in January 1953, and from that time he stood up for separation of the Southern Cameroons from Eastern Nigeria. When this was accomplished, he was elected to the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly and was a member of the Executive Council, too. In 1957 he took the office of Minister of Works in ENDELEY's government.

The issue was decided by the plebiscite which took place under the auspices of the United Nations in February 1961. The K.N.D.P., in alliance with the One Kamerun Party, took stand for union with the Republic of Cameroun, the C.P.N.C. decided in favour of joining Nigeria. The electorate (95 per cent of the qualified voters) decided for union with the Republic of Cameroun by 233,571 votes to 97,741.

On October 1, 1961, the Southern Cameroons ceased to be a British trust territory and, as an independent state, joined the Federal Republic of Cameroun.

#### (b) Northern Cameroons

The Trusteeship Agreement on the British Cameroons placed the former British mandated territory as a whole under British administration. The British government, however, administered the Northern Cameroons, separately from the Southern Cameroons, as part of Northern Nigeria, with the tacit approval of the United Nations.

An especially untoward situation arose when the Southern Cameroons was granted self-government, while the British government, despite its responsibilities under the trusteeship agreement for preparing the trust territory for independence (like the Southern Cameroons), placed the Northern Cameroons under the authority and control of the federal government of Nigeria.

The UN Visiting Mission to the Northern Cameroons in its 1958-1959 report proposed termination of the trusteeship agreement, without consulting the population, and annexation of the territory to Nigeria. But the United Nations General Assembly in March 1959, after hearing the Cameroonian petitioners and discussing the situation in the Northern Cameroons, resolved that a plebiscite should take place in the territory in November 1959 to allow the population to decide whether or not it wanted to belong to Nigeria.

In the plebiscite of November 1959 the great majority of the population of the Northern Cameroons decided, by 70,401 votes to 42,797, against annexation to Nigeria and for postponing the final decision on the future of the territory. On the basis of the plebiscite results the United Nations General Assembly at its fourteenth session, on December 12, 1959, resolved that the necessary measures should immediately be taken to decentralize the administration, to democratize the local government organs, and to separate the territory from Nigeria by October 1, 1960, at the latest and that by March 1961 a new plebiscite should be held to answer the question whether the people of the territory wished to achieve independence by joining the independent Republic of Cameroun or the independent Federation of Nigeria.

After the 1959 plebiscite a new political party, the Democratic Party, was formed in the Northern Cameroons with the aim of achieving separation of the country from the Northern Region of Nigeria and its union with the Southern Cameroons. In January 1960 the leaders of the party visited the Southern Cameroons to discuss with the FONCHA government the matter of union between the two territories and arrived at an agreement on including representatives of the Northern Cameroons in the Southern Cameroons House of Assembly.

Although the United Kingdom delegation also voted the UN resolution on the new plebiscite, the British government did not fulfil its obligations either to decentralize and democratize the administration or to separate the territory from Nigeria. On the contrary, during 1960 it speeded up replacing the British colonial officials by Nigerians, thus making the territory more and more dependent on the



government of Nigeria. This action of the British government, in disregard of the UN resolution which it had voted itself, explains the fact, entirely incomprehensible at first sight, that the population of the Northern Cameroons which, in the plebiscite of November 1959, voted by a two-thirds majority against joining the Federation of Nigeria, in the new plebiscite held in February 1961 in which 83 per cent of the electorate participated, favoured union with Nigeria by 146,296 votes to 97,659. In spite of the fact that the plebiscite was held under special UN supervision, the polling was all the way irregular, in full disregard of the UN resolutions. As the territory was not separated from Northern Nigeria, the plebiscite was carried out by the interested Nigerian authorities. These arranged for the registration of voters just as for the count of the vote — in the presence of UN representatives — so as to suit their own interests, not shrinking from falsification and trickery either.

A few days after the plebiscite (February 17) the Northern Cameroons Democratic Party and the Cameroons Liberty Party addressed a joint statement to the plebiscite commissioner and to the representative of the United Nations, complaining against the falsifications and declaring that they refused to recognize the results, and demanded that a new plebiscite be held in the proper manner.<sup>1</sup> Thereafter, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Information of the Republic of Cameroun issued a 48-page pamphlet enumerating a multitude of concrete facts to prove that the results of the plebiscite had been falsified.<sup>2</sup>

The report of the UN Visiting Mission appointed to supervise the plebiscite was discussed in the United Nations in April 1961. The report stated that the plebiscite had been conducted in order, and the results reflected the will of the population. The delegation of the Republic of Cameroun and 23 petitioners refuted this point of the report and objected to the falsification of the plebiscite. Delegations of ten African states (former French colonies) demanded that the decision on the Northern Cameroons be deferred until autumn and that in the meantime the United Nations send a mission to investigate the irregularities committed during the plebiscite. The British representative (ANDREW COHEN) denied the fact of irregularities and demanded immediate decision that the Northern Cameroons should join the Federation of Nigeria. India and eleven other states moved that the United Nations should approve of the plebiscite returns and that the Northern Cameroons should join Nigeria on June 1, 1961. The trusteeship committee adopted this proposal by 59 votes to 2 (with 9 socialist countries abstaining).<sup>3</sup> The General Assembly approved of this resolution of the trusteeship committee, and accordingly the Northern Cameroons ceased to be a trust territory on June 1, 1961, to become part of the Federation of Nigeria.

That the tug-of-war around the Northern Cameroons was a confrontation between British and French imperialism is beyond doubt. That the accusations made by the AHIDJO government and the parties of the Northern Cameroons were somewhat exaggerated is also probable. But all this did not alter the fact that the plebiscite result's being favourable to Nigeria was due to serious abuses and irregularities, and

<sup>1</sup> The text of the statement is to be found in the pamphlet referred to below, issued by the government of the Republic of Cameroun.

<sup>2</sup> Republic of Cameroun: Position of the Republic of Cameroun following the plebiscite of 11th and 12th February 1961 in the northern portion of the territory of the Cameroons under the administration of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. 1961.

<sup>3</sup> France and the former French colonies (except Guinea, Mali and Togo) as well as Belgium and the former Belgian Congo walked out of the meeting in demonstration and did not take part in the vote.

that the United Nations, by endorsing the report of its representatives who had shut their eyes to this fact, and by consenting to the Northern Cameroons joining Nigeria, passed a decision contrary to the letter and the spirit of its Charter.

### *British Togoland*

One of the main preoccupations in British Togoland was the problem of the Ewe tribes. These had been separated from one another by the European colonizers at the time of the partition of Africa in the first quarter of the nineteenth century. The larger part of the tribes came under British rule in the Gold Coast Colony, the rest were subdued by German imperialism (Togoland). After World War I this dismemberment of the Ewe people was further complicated by the division of the German colony between Britain and France. At the time when the two portions of Togoland were declared trust territories under British and French administration respectively, the Ewe population in the Gold Coast numbered 330,000, in French Togoland 290,000, and in British Togoland 126,000.

Already on the morrow of World War I the Ewes developed a movement demanding unification of their tribes and self-government for their people. In this they enjoyed also the support of the Gold Coast national movement. This demand of the Ewes was included in the petition which the CASLEY-HAYFORD delegation of the West African Congress in 1920 presented to the British Foreign Secretary. But the division of Togoland, which thus resulted in a new split of the Ewe tribes and which took place under a secret agreement between the British and the French imperialists (LLOYD GEORGE and CLEMENCEAU), was sanctioned by the League of Nations and was to continue over the next quarter of a century.

At the end of World War II the Ewes thought the time was ripe for taking action to assert their demands for unification and independence. For this purpose two political organizations of British Togoland (the Togoland Union and the Trans-Volta Ewe Union) and the Comité de l'Unité Togolaise of French Togoland formed a joint political forum, the All-Ewe Conference, which shortly after the adoption in San Francisco of the Charter of the United Nations appealed to the UN Trusteeship Council declaring the following:

"We deeply deplore the partition of our country as this constituted a very serious barrier to our social, economic, educational and political progress as a people, and we therefore do hereby resolve

"(a) that all the international frontiers cutting across Eweland be removed and all Eweland brought under a single administration;

"(b) that the whole of Eweland become a Trust Territory;

"(c) that Great Britain be invited to become the Administering Authority in Eweland."

As the United Nations did not respond to this appeal of the Ewes, which violently infuriated the French government, the All-Ewe Conference in September 1946 submitted to the United Nations a new petition, signed by 45 chiefs on behalf of all Ewes living under British and French rule, demanding the unification of all Ewes in a single trust territory, but leaving it to the United Nations to appoint the Administering Authority. The United Nations, however, also this time failed to take note of the manifestation of the Ewes' will: it concluded trusteeship agreements with the governments of both colonial powers on the administration of the former mandated territories, thereby sanctioning again the three-way split of the Ewe tribes. That the



United Nations, in approving the terms of the trusteeship agreements, took into consideration only the interests of the colonialists, entirely disregarding the Ewe interests, is shown by the fact that:

1. Article 5 (a) of the Trusteeship Agreement authorized the British government to administer the Trust Territory as an integral part of the Gold Coast;

2. while consenting to the unification, subject to certain frontier rectifications, of some other tribes (Dagomba, Mamprusi) divided by the Togoland-Gold Coast boundary in the north, the United Nations sanctioned the threefold division of Eweland in accordance with the will of the two colonial powers.

In December 1947 SYLVANUS OLYMPIO,<sup>1</sup> as a petitioner representing the All-Ewe Conference before the UN Trusteeship Council, demanded immediate unification of Eweland under the administration of either of the two colonial powers. The Trusteeship Council did not endorse the Ewe position this time either, and decided that it could invite neither of the colonial powers to retract from the trusteeship engagement, and that decision concerning the Ewes living in the Gold Coast — this being not a trust territory — was beyond its competence. By its decision the Council invited the British and French governments to resolve between themselves the problems caused by the forced division of the former German colony.

The two colonial powers, as if to comply with the decision of the Trusteeship Council, in 1948 established an Anglo-French Standing Consultative Commission to settle the Togoland issue. Members of the Commission were, besides the British Governor of the Gold Coast and the Commissioner of French Togoland, two representatives of each of the two trust territories. As the Commission did nothing to make a settlement, the UN Trusteeship Council invited the British and French governments to start talks between them and with the recognized political leaders of the Ewe movement to find a satisfactory solution to the problem of Eweland. To promote an appropriate compromise, the Trusteeship Council decided to send in summer 1949 a Visiting Mission to Togoland to examine the question of unification of the Ewe people.

The UN Visiting Mission submitted its report to the Trusteeship Council in February 1950. The report, while speaking highly of the activity of the Administering Authorities and the Consultative Commission they had set up jointly, and of the measures they had taken to improve the material conditions of the population of the two trust territories, had to state at the same time that the movement for unification in the southern parts of both territories and in the Keta district of the Gold Coast assumed the character of a national movement of the people, and proposed that the Standing Consultative Commission should meet the demand of the majority of the populations by making efforts to unify or co-ordinate the laws and regulations in force in the two countries in respect of economic and financial affairs, and in the field of communication, public utilities, cultural and educational facilities.

The British and French governments thought to comply with the UN recommendation by deciding to enlarge the Consultative Commission and to widen its scope of authority. The refreshed Commission, headed by the two Governors, would have consisted of 27 elected representatives from the British trust territory and 30 from the French trust territory. The election of members took place in October–November 1950, but since the French colonial authorities resorted to trickery to defeat the candidates of the Comité de l'Unité Togolaise, the Ewes of the French territory did not recognize the Commission thus elected, and the All-Ewe Conference

<sup>1</sup> See p. 105.

decided also to boycott the Commission on behalf of British Togoland. In its telegram of protest to the Trusteeship Council the All-Ewe Conference stated that the Ewes neither from French nor from British Togoland could take part in the work of the Commission until the falsified elections had been declared invalid and new free elections held, and in case this should not happen, the Ewes would not accept the Commission's decisions as binding upon themselves.

To this the two Administering Authorities responded by making another misleading move: they appealed to the Trusteeship Council proposing that the Standing Consultative Commission be superseded by a Joint Council for Togoland Affairs, composed of elected representatives of the two trust territories. The United Nations General Assembly at its sixth session (1951–1952) endorsed this proposal on condition that the composition of the Council should be such as to ensure the promotion of the economic, political, social and cultural development of both territories.

The Ewe representatives saw the establishment of the Joint Council as an empty gesture. The Council was in fact nothing more than a consultative body without any legislative or executive powers, entitled not even to discuss the Ewe unification problem. Moreover, the Ewes of British Togoland protested against the uneven distribution of seats in the Council between the two trust territories: French Togoland had fourteen seats, while British Togoland had only four. The representatives of the Ewe associations demanded that the election of the Council members take place under UN supervision and that the Council be invested with legislative and executive powers. "We are offered", said S. G. ANTOR, representative of the Joint Togoland Congress, before the Trusteeship Council in December 1951, "yet another consultative commission but without any real powers, and doubtless its membership would again be handpicked."

There was, however, no agreement among the Togoland speakers before the Trusteeship Council either. The Ewe representatives were all agreed on unification, but some of them formed an idea of Togoland as an independent state, while others were in favour of federation with the Gold Coast. On the other hand, the Ewe representatives were opposed by those of other Northern Togoland tribes who demanded unification under French administration.

The Joint Council held its first meeting at Lomé on August 1, 1953. However, four representatives of British Togoland, as well as two from French Togoland (members of the Comité de l'Unité Togolaise), walked out of the meeting in protest against the practices of the French colonial authorities which, during the election of the Council members, had brought pressure to bear upon the voters and had again committed electoral fraud.

The All-Ewe Conference and the rest of other Ewe organizations (the C.P.P. branch in the Trans-Volta Region, the Togoland Youth Association, the Joint Togoland Congress) demanded that the Council members be elected on the basis of universal franchise, and that the two trust territories be represented in the Council on an equal footing.

A new UN Visiting Mission was to Togoland in September–October 1952. The Trusteeship Council had appointed the mission, in addition to examining the conditions in both trust territories, to make and submit to the Council concrete recommendations on the Ewe and Togoland unification question. But the mission failed to fulfil this task. Its report presented to the General Assembly of the United Nations at its seventh session in December 1953 contained no new recommendations for the solution of the problem of unification either of the Ewe tribes or of the two trust



territories. To be sure, the work of the mission had been greatly hindered by the circumstance that the authorities of the French trust territory had done their utmost to prevent the mission from contacting the African population. When the mission went to Lomé, the French authorities closed the common frontier with British Togoland, and the border police assaulted and beat up many Ewes who wanted to leave the British territory to meet the mission members in Lomé. Police squads came also from Senegal and the Ivory Coast to terrorize the population and disperse the people's meetings called by the mission in the larger towns (Lomé, Palimé, Atakpamé); they also raided the premises of the Youth Association. Editors and other staff members of several African newspapers were arrested and imprisoned: the editor of *Les Echos du Togo* was charged with publishing in his paper a complaint addressed to the United Nations; the correspondent of the Accra *Daily Graphic* was called to account for having interviewed the UN Visiting Mission.

The lack of impartiality and the carelessness of the UN Visiting Mission are revealed by the fact that its report remained silent about the preposterous practices of the French authorities, although the representatives of the Ewes — notably the Rev. Dr. FIAWOO — directly had requested the mission to report to the United Nations on the atrocities of the French authorities.<sup>1</sup> It is no less revolting that the United Nations General Assembly endorsed this unscrupulous report and passed no resolution on the merits of the Togoland issue, either at that time or at its next (eighth) session in 1953.

The future of the British trust territory was decided in 1954, when the British government in a statement to the UN Trusteeship Council stressed that, if the Gold Coast should become independent, the British government would not be in a position to continue administering the portion of Togoland in its charge as an "integral part of the Gold Coast", and that the Trusteeship Agreement would be best served if Togoland should also become independent as an integral part of independent Ghana.

On the basis of the British statement the United Nations in August 1955 sent a Visiting Mission to British Togoland with the task of finding out the solution best suited to the wishes of the inhabitants of the country.

The UN General Assembly discussed the report of the Visiting Mission at its tenth session and after a heated debate recommended that a plebiscite be organized without delay in Togoland under British administration to ascertain the wishes of the people in regard to union with an independent Ghana or separation from the Gold Coast and temporary continuance under British administration. The plebiscite took place on May 6, 1956. The number of actual voters was 160,587 (82 per cent of the electorate), 93,095 of them voting in favour of joining Ghana and 67,492 against union.

On the basis of the plebiscite results, and on the recommendation of the Trusteeship Council, the General Assembly of the United Nations, at its eleventh session in November 1956, decided to terminate the Trusteeship Agreement under which the United Kingdom had been appointed Administering Authority of British Togoland. Consequently, former British Togoland attained independence as an integral part of independent Ghana on March 6, 1957.

<sup>1</sup> This omission of the UN Visiting Mission is not surprising if one takes a look at its composition: its four members were representatives of Australia, Belgium, El Salvador, and the Chiang Kai-shek clique.

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## THE BRITISH PROTECTORATES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA

After the war's end the dispute between Great Britain and the Union of South Africa renewed over the future of the three British Protectorates. MALAN and other members of his government had many times expressed the opinion that the mere existence of the Protectorates was a threat to the military and internal security of the Union. They argued that those territories bordering on the Union might "offer an easy prey to a hostile power" and "easily prove a refuge for subversive elements and a headquarters for the organization and guidance of movements within the Union itself".<sup>1</sup>

Another argument of the Nationalists in support of incorporation of the Protectorates was that it would make it possible to solve the complete segregation of the African population of the Union over a single large expanse of land. They said this aim of the apartheid policy was now unfeasible because the Africans did not own enough land (they said so while the European settlers possessed 92 per cent of the country's tillable land — untilled for the most part).

In 1953 MALAN said that he would give Great Britain five years to cede the Protectorates to the Union, and in 1954 he asked for resumption of negotiations to this end. CHURCHILL in turn emphasized that the population of the Protectorates and the British Parliament must be consulted before deciding on any change, but that annexation was out of the question.

In 1956, when the question of the independent Gold Coast (Ghana) becoming a member of the British Commonwealth was taken up, STRIJDOM threatened to retaliate by annexing the three British Protectorates in Southern Africa. This, however, remained a threat, to be repeated in later years several times by STRIJDOM and VERWOERD. The British government, on the other hand, had stated on several occasions that it held to its original position. In 1959, for example, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations reiterated what CHURCHILL had said in 1954.

The leading politicians of the peoples of the three Protectorates, however, were not to be appeased by the statements of the British government. On January 22-23, 1962, leaders of the Basutoland Congress Party, the Bechuanaland People's Party and the Swaziland Progressive Party conducted talks at Mbane in Swaziland, and decided to establish a Pan-African solidarity conference for the purpose of co-ordinating the independence struggles of the three territories and particularly of

<sup>1</sup> See G. KIMBLE, *Tropical Africa*, Vol. II, p. 250.



organizing combined resistance in case Great Britain and the South African government would come to an agreement on the future of the Protectorates without consulting the peoples of those territories.

In June 1962 the UN Special Committee on decolonization, by its resolution adopted at Dar es Salaam, recommended the United Nations General Assembly to call upon the United Kingdom government to introduce appropriate constitutional reforms preparing the three Protectorates for independence. The resolution stated that the British government had failed to grant independence to those territories as provided by the General Assembly; it stressed that the election laws in force in the Protectorates as well as the draft Constitutions worked out by the British authorities contained provisions for racial discrimination, did not meet the wish of the population, and were incompatible with the UN Declaration on the granting of independence to colonial countries and peoples. The Committee expressed its concern at South Africa's plans for annexation and requested the General Assembly to lay down that any attempt at annexing the Protectorates or violating their territorial integrity would be regarded as an act of aggression infringing the UN Charter.

#### *The Question of the Protectorates in the UN General Assembly at its 17th Session*

After considering the Special Committee's recommendations and hearing the petitioners, the United Nations on December 18, 1962, adopted an important resolution on the question of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland, in which the General Assembly:

"*Noting* that the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as the administering Power, . . . has not taken steps to transfer all powers to the peoples of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland,

"*Noting* that the constitutional provisions now contemplated for these Territories and the electoral legislation in force are discriminatory, do not meet the wishes of the peoples and are not consistent with the General Assembly Declaration [of 14 December 1960],

"*Deploing* the particularly alarming economic and social situation prevailing in Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland after several decades of colonial rule,

"*Expressing its profound concern* at the declared intention of the Government of the Republic of South Africa to annex these territories, and condemning any attempt to jeopardize the right of the peoples of these Territories to establish their own independent States,

"*Taking note* of the statement by the administering Power to the effect that these Territories are politically completely independent of South Africa and that the United Kingdom Government adheres to this policy, and that there is no question of that Government agreeing at this stage to the transfer of these Territories to the Republic of South Africa,

"1. *Reaffirms* the inalienable right of the peoples of Basutoland and Swaziland to self-determination and independence;

"2. *Invites* the administering Power immediately to suspend the present constitutional provisions and to proceed without further delay to hold elections in the three Territories on the basis of direct universal suffrage;

"3. *Invites further* the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to abrogate the present constitutional provisions and to convene

immediately a constitutional conference with the participation of the democratically elected political leaders of the three Territories, with a view to setting, in accordance with their wishes, the date on which each of the Territories will attain its independence;

"4. *Considers* that a serious effort should be made to provide economic, financial and technical assistance, through United Nations programmes of technical co-operation and the specialized agencies, in order to remedy the deplorable economic and social situation of the three Territories;

"5. *Urges* the administering Power to take immediate steps to return to the indigenous inhabitants all the land taken from them, whatever the form of, or pretext for, such alienation;

"6. *Declares solemnly* that any attempt to annex Basutoland, Bechuanaland or Swaziland, or to encroach upon their territorial integrity in any way, will be regarded by the United Nations as an act of aggression violating the Charter of the United Nations."

#### *A New Attempt by the South African Government*

The government of South Africa, however, which had long been ignoring the UN resolutions, saw in this action of the General Assembly a new inspiration for provocation. In summer of 1963 the government-controlled South African press published article after article on what it termed "Communist menace" to the Southern African Protectorates. Now it wrote about those territories being pushed under Chinese Communist influence (allegedly proof of this was a trip to Peking of three members of the Basutoland Communist Party, as well as a visit to Cairo by the Vice-President of the Bechuanaland People's Party, who was said to have negotiated there with a Chinese official about a possible uprising), and now it rang the alarm because of the growing activity of the Basutoland Communist Party.

After such antecedents Prime Minister VERWOERD of South Africa told the Nationalist Party congress in Pretoria on September 4, 1963, that the Republic of South Africa was willing to take over the administration of the three British Protectorates so as to form in them "Bantustans" like those created in South Africa proper. The British government responded to VERWOERD's offer the same day: it released an official statement to the effect that the annexation of the Protectorates to the Republic of South Africa was entirely out of the question. This categorical stand of the British government forced VERWOERD to back down: on September 6 he hypocritically said that he had been misunderstood, he only had told about how it would be possible to accelerate the economic development of those territories and promote their accession to independence.

This forced backing down, however, did not at all mean that the South African government had given up its intention to control the Protectorates. On September 13, 1963, the South African Minister of Transport, SCHOEMAN, issued a government decision by which all planes taking off from Bechuanaland, Basutoland and Swaziland, or bound for those territories, must land at one of the airports of the Republic of South Africa even if the aircraft were plying between two of those Protectorates. At the same time the government prohibited the planes of East African Airlines (which had until then secured the air services in the three Protectorates) from flying over the territory of the Republic of South Africa or landing at any of its airports.



The December 1962 resolution of the UN General Assembly and the resulting conduct of the South African government compelled the British government to take a resolute stand. On November 14, 1963, the Colonial Secretary in the House of Lords spoke about the future of the British High Commission Territories of South Africa. He stated that those territories were drawing near to self-government, where they would receive a Constitution which would enable their peoples to express freely their will regarding the future of their countries. Until that date the British government would hold the responsibilities of administration, and it would not transfer these functions to any other power without consulting the populations of the territories. When the time of self-determination would come, each of the territories would have to enter into direct negotiations with South Africa about their mutual relationships.

*The Question of the Protectorates in the UN General Assembly at its 18th Session*

Meanwhile, in July 1963, the UN Special Committee on decolonization again dealt with the question of the three High Commission Territories and submitted its recommendations to the General Assembly, which on December 11, 1963, adopted a new resolution; in the operative part the General Assembly, recalling its resolution adopted at the 17th session, pointed to the unsatisfactory economic and social conditions in the three territories, to the necessity of returning to the indigenous inhabitants all the land taken from them and of convening a constitutional conference with a view to preparing general elections and independence; finally it warned against any attempt to violate the territorial integrity of the three countries and requested the Secretary-General to provide assistance through UN programmes.

*Administrative Reform in the Protectorates*

The British government, while failing to comply with the UN demand for the return of land, fulfilled at least the provision for convening a constitutional conference. In addition, in May 1964, it announced to the House of Commons that the High Commissioner's office would be terminated and his functions taken over by special British Residents for the three Protectorates. This reform was introduced as of August 1, 1964.

*The Question of the Protectorates in the UN General Assembly at its 19th Session*

The UN Special Committee again considered in detail the problems of the three Protectorates at its meetings held from October 6 to November 2, 1964. On November 2 it adopted a resolution inviting the British government to take immediate steps for the transfer of powers to the freely elected representatives of those territories and to return to the Africans the land taken from them; it reaffirmed that any attempt to annex the territories should be considered an act of aggression, and asked the Secretary-General, in consultation with the British government, to "study the ways and means of ensuring the economic independence of these territories from the Re-

public of South Africa", and to submit a report to the Committee and the General Assembly. Also it requested the Secretary-General to intensify, in co-operation with the UN specialized agencies, programmes of economic, technical and financial assistance to these territories.

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The British government "protected" those territories from the South African fascists and was unwilling to consent to their annexation. One might believe that the British government's attitude was dictated by altruism, considering the minor economic value of those territories to English capitalists. All the greater was, however, their strategic importance. The British imperialists supported the South African fascists against the African population of their country. But they needed the Southern African Protectorates from two points of view: (1) by closing the frontiers the British government might, if necessary, apply pressure upon the South African government economically (the three Protectorates — especially Basutoland — having been the principal labour reserve of the South African capitalists); (2) in case of more serious conflicts the three Protectorates might provide Britain with three huge military bases, three enormous bridgeheads wedged in the territory of the Republic of South Africa. That is why Britain was opposed to their annexation by the Republic of South Africa, and why she had so long declined to grant them independence, although this would mean an incomparatively smaller harm than the loss of any other colony.

In imperialist circles — even in British and U.S. liberal quarters — it was a widespread view that these territories were not suited for independence, and that Britain would sooner or later agree to their annexation by South Africa, on the basis of a half-promise made at the time of the birth of the Union of South Africa. It is typical, for example, that even such a liberal-minded American author as STEWART C. EASTON, in his otherwise very valuable book entitled *The Twilight of European Colonialism*, which deals with all African colonies (or ex-colonies), refrained from discussing the Southern African Protectorates, because he also regarded their accession to independence as an impossible idea.<sup>1</sup>

The decades-long hesitation of the British imperialists about the Protectorates can be explained by two contradictions:

1. The British capitalists, who had large-scale interests in Southern Africa, were always ready to promote the exploitation of the African populations of the Protectorates by South African capitalists, but they saw the strategic interests of British imperialism jeopardized by the annexation of the Protectorates to the Union (Republic) of South Africa.

2. Making the Protectorates independent states would have prevented their annexation by the Union (Republic) of South Africa, but would have also jeopardized their control by British imperialism and their use as strategic bases.

<sup>1</sup> "All the British dependencies receive some attention in this section of the book, with the exception of the High Commission Territories of South Africa, which are in a special category, and can never hope to attain independence as self-governing states on the Western model. The Union of South Africa has frequently asked the British to relinquish rule over them to her. It is agreed by all that the present status of the territories is a temporary one, and cannot continue indefinitely. Thus it would be pointless to discuss the constitutional progress of such territories, and they are omitted from this book." (S. C. EASTON, *The Twilight of European Colonialism*, New York, p. 40.)



After long hesitation, however, British imperialism found the solution that suited its best interests. It realized that if it managed to have the Protectorates set up governments which would serve loyally the British interests and establish good relations with the South African government at the same time, so as to satisfy the economic demands of the South African capitalists, then the granting of independence — which was more and more insistently demanded by world public opinion — was a convenient safeguard against annexation to the Republic of South Africa and would secure the territories as strategic bases of British imperialism. In spring of 1965 this idea was realized with the coming to power of LEABUA in Basutoland and SERETSE in Bechuanaland. The British government managed to arrive at an agreement with Bechuanaland in February 1966, and with Basutoland in June 1966.

#### *The British Government's Change of Policy*

The communiqué issued by the British Commonwealth Prime Ministers' Conference of June 1965 noted with satisfaction the statement by the British Prime Minister that he considered it a duty of his government to promote, on the basis of universal suffrage and democratic government, the independence of all British dependent territories which so desire and are capable of implementing it. It stressed also the opinion of the conference that Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland should be given the economic assistance they needed to maintain themselves as independent states, and their territorial integrity should be guaranteed.

On July 1, 1965, in London, in a joint sitting of the Royal African Society and the Royal Commonwealth Society, a high official of the Colonial Office, Mrs. EIRENE WHITE, talked of the rapid progress of constitutional development in the three Protectorates. She explained at the same time that none of the three territories were economically independent, neither could they win independence for a time yet, because they were still considerably dependent on South Africa for technical and other skilled personnel. She gave expression to her concern that political independence along with continued economic and administrative dependence would cause "a very severe headache". Therefore she remarked that, before granting them independence, Britain had to do her best to liquidate their economic and administrative backwardness. With regard to their relationships with South Africa, the fact of their dependence must be recognized, and each of the three territories must work out its own scheme for coexistence with South Africa. The South African government's "Bantustan policy" was unacceptable to the British government just as to those countries. It was the duty of the British government to enable the peoples of the three territories to chart their own future policies before and after accession to independence.

#### *The Stand of the Organization of African Unity*

The conference of heads of state and government of African countries held under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity in Cairo in July 1964, having discussed the problems concerning independence of the British High Commission Territories in Southern Africa, adopted a resolution stating that the conference:

"1. Requests the Member States of OAU in consultation with the authorities of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland to take the necessary steps so as to secure

a guarantee by the United Nations for the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of these Territories; and

"2. Authorizes in particular the African group at the United Nations to take the necessary measures, in consultation with the Committee of Liberation and the nationalist movements in these Territories, to bring the question of guarantee before the Security Council at the appropriate time."

At their conference held at Accra fifteen months later, in October 1965, the African heads of state and government, considering that "parties which have openly declared that they would closely co-operate with the Pretoria regime have assumed control of the governmental machineries in these Territories", and "being desirous to prevent the absorption of these Territories by the Pretoria Government", pledged that the Organization of African Unity would continue assisting the freedom movements of the three threatened countries and reiterated their appeal of the previous year to member states of the Organization and to the African group at the United Nations to take the necessary steps to guarantee the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of those countries.

#### *The Question of the Protectorates in the UN General Assembly at Its 20th Session*

At its 20th session the UN General Assembly again discussed the questions of the Protectorates in Southern Africa, and in its resolution of December 16, 1965, again invited the British government to take urgent steps to implement the previous UN resolutions "in conformity with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples of the three Territories", and renewed its request that the British government "should take immediate steps to return to the indigenous inhabitants all the land taken from them, whatever the form of or pretext for such alienation"; it requested the Special Committee on decolonization to consider, in co-operation with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, what measures were needed to guarantee the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the three territories, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its 21st session. Finally the resolution pointed out the necessity of providing economic and technical assistance to the three territories, through United Nations programmes, and requested the Secretary-General to appoint resident representatives to control the operation of the UN fund established for the three territories.

#### *The Duplicity of the South African Government*

On June 5, 1965, Foreign Minister HILLGARD MÜLLER of South Africa declared that his government welcomed the independence of the three Protectorates and intended to co-operate with them in the economic and technical fields without interfering in their internal affairs or political systems.

On September 30 Prime Minister VERWOERD said at a meeting of his party in Upington that the three territories, by reason of their vicinity, were of great importance to South Africa, which therefore would help them to progress in peace on the road of prosperity.

On February 7, 1966, Deputy Minister of Bantu Affairs M. C. BOTHA declared in the South African House of Assembly that his government was ready to help the peoples of the three territories to buy back the lands actually occupied by Europeans,



but only in case South Africa got free hand in the direction of the future political and economic development of those countries.

On March 28, 1966, at an electoral meeting of his party in Springs, VERWOERD denounced the intention of the United Kingdom and the United States to promote their influence over the three Protectorates, he reproached them for flooding those administrative machineries with hired agents to try to hamper or undermine their friendship with the Republic of South Africa. He appealed to the two great powers: instead of creating confusion as they did in other parts of Africa, they had better not disturb natural development in Southern Africa. The Republic wanted neither to incorporate those territories nor to govern them, and was ready to supply them with anything they needed and to maintain good-neighbour relations with them, first of all in the economic field, without interference from outside.

#### *The UN Special Committee Resolution of June 1966*

In May-June 1966 the UN Special Committee devoted six meetings to the question of the Protectorates. It heard and discussed the petitions of oppositionist leaders MOKHEHLE and MAKOTO of Basutoland, ZWANE and NQUKU of Swaziland, and of representatives of the Pan-African Congress of South Africa (RABOROKO, LEBALLO, NGCOBO), unmasking the vicious policies of the British and South African governments and the opportunist minority governments of LEABUA and SOBUZA. In its meeting of June 9, it adopted, by 20 votes to none, a resolution submitted by representatives of 12 Afro-Asian countries and Yugoslavia. The resolution noted with satisfaction that the British government had appointed the date of independence for Bechuanaland, but at the same time it stated with regret that the same had not yet been done in respect of the other two territories, and renewed the request which the General Assembly had made at its 20th session, that the British government should guarantee the independence of the three territories "in conformity with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples" and return the lands taken from the indigenous population. Finally it requested the Secretary-General to appoint special UN representatives to observe progress toward independence in each country and to report to the General Assembly. The Committee set up a Sub-Committee "with a view to studying and suggesting all necessary measures for securing the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the three Territories as requested by the General Assembly in paragraph 5 of its resolution 2063 (XX)".

In its meeting of June 22 the Special Committee delegated to the Sub-Committee the representatives of Afghanistan, Bulgaria, Iran, Italy, Mali, Madagascar and Uruguay.

This Sub-Committee composed of seven members studied the situation and the problems of the three territories in six meetings from July 27 to September 9.

#### *The Sub-Committee Report*

After a careful study of all available documents (General Assembly records, Special Committee reports, petitions) the Sub-Committee stated that the British government still had not implemented the pertinent UN resolutions, that those three territories still had no governments freely chosen by their peoples, and that their territorial integrity and sovereignty were exposed to increasing interference. Con-

sidering that, in spite of the critical situation, the date of independence for Bechuanaland and Basutoland was drawing near (September 30 and October 4, respectively), the Sub-Committee deemed it necessary to propose urgent measures with a view to securing the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the three countries.

Accordingly, in its report to the Special Committee unanimously adopted on September 9, the Sub-Committee recommended the Special Committee to remind the British government of its responsibility for the granting of independence to the three territories in conformity with the General Assembly resolutions and to urge it to enable the peoples of those territories to freely express their wishes, elect their respective governments in a democratic manner; further to demand that the British government, before the granting of independence, should take every necessary step to ensure that those territories enjoyed complete independence and could protect their territorial integrity and sovereignty in the face of the unconcealed intentions of the racist regime of South Africa to continue interfering in their political, economic and social affairs.

It also recommended the Special Committee to make proposals to the UN General Assembly at its 21st session that, considering the extreme urgency of the question, the issue of the Protectorates should be discussed promptly after the opening of the session, and —

(1) to remind solemnly the government of the Republic of South Africa that "any attempt to encroach upon the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the three Territories following independence shall be considered by the United Nations to be an act of aggression; and that any interference in their domestic affairs, including economic matters, and any hindrance of the movement in transit of persons and goods shall be considered a flagrant violation of the United Nations Charter, with all the attendant consequences . . .";

(2) to call the attention of the Security Council to the threat which the policy of the racist government of the Republic of South Africa might pose to the independence, territorial integrity and sovereignty of the three countries after independence;

(3) finally to invite all states to refrain from any step that might encourage the government of the Republic of South Africa to threaten the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the three countries or to interfere in their domestic affairs.

In conclusion the Sub-Committee recommended the Special Committee to consult the Organization of African Unity, which had repeatedly raised its voice (in 1964 and 1965) in favour of safeguarding the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of the three countries.

The Sub-Committee report was discussed by the Special Committee at its meeting of September 15; then followed again the farce which had first been performed on July 8 in the matter of Basutoland.<sup>1</sup>

The British representative in his hypocritical plea expressed his non-agreement with the findings of the Sub-Committee and gave an untrue picture of the situation prevailing in the three territories. Lest the dragging out of the debate should postpone the forthcoming date of independence for Bechuanaland and Basutoland and thus the coming to power of vassal governments suited to the neocolonialist goals

<sup>1</sup> See p. 286.



of the British government, he declared his willingness to accept the Sub-Committee report, without passing a resolution, in the form of an "understanding" among members of the Committee. His associates, representatives of the imperialist powers in the Committee (the United States and others), adopted the same attitude, so that the Sub-Committee report was presented to the General Assembly as part of the report of the Special Committee. In the preamble of the resolution adopted on September 29, one day before the date of independence for Bechuanaland and five days before that for Basutoland, the General Assembly reiterated "its grave concern at the serious threat to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland constituted by the aggressive policies of the present regime in the Republic of South Africa", and approved the report of the Special Committee. But the concrete measures proposed by the Sub-Committee in its report were left unmentioned in the resolution.

Thereby the fate of Bechuanaland and Basutoland was sealed. Thanks to the United Nations, there was no obstacle to their becoming independent in such a way as to please the neocolonialists.

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*The Seretse Khama Affair*

After the death of Chief SEKGOMA (1926) the Bamangwatos, the largest of the Bechuana tribes, were ruled by TSHEKEDI KHAMA, who was Regent as guardian of his nephew, four-year-old SERETSE KHAMA, son of SEKGOMA. SERETSE went to school in the Union of South Africa. During the war he was studying at the University of the Witwatersrand, when his tribe called him home to take over. With the consent of the tribe, however, he went to England to study law. While in London, he made acquaintance with an English girl, RUTH WILLIAMS, whom he married, despite the objection of TSHEKEDI KHAMA, in September 1948. The Bamangwato tribe reproached SERETSE for his act and called upon him to return home to discuss the matter. At a tribal assembly held with the participation of SERETSE in November 1948 the elders of the tribe, who were under the influence of TSHEKEDI, decided not to take in SERETSE's wife and invited him to disclaim her and take over the paramountcy. He was unwilling to comply with this decision. Tribal public opinion received the decision with concern, for it was feared that the break with SERETSE might result in definitively confirming TSHEKEDI to the chieftaincy, and this was not to the liking of the majority of the tribe. At the next tribal assembly, held in December, SERETSE already had a wider support, and the meeting dissolved without passing a decision. It was agreed that SERETSE should for the time being go back to London and finish his studies, while the matter would be considered further.

In June 1949 SERETSE returned to Bechuanaland, and the *Kgotla* (the Bechuana tribal assembly) held another meeting, which then decided by a large majority to take SERETSE's side.

Neither TSHEKEDI nor the British government could put up with this decision of the tribe. At TSHEKEDI's request the British government sent out a Commission to examine whether SERETSE was fit for the paramountcy. The British government did not publish the Commission's report — because it disagreed with some of the findings, saying that decision would be based not only on the report but also on information from other sources — and all it announced was that the Commission decided against SERETSE's recognition.

Afterwards SERETSE was invited to go to London for talks with the British government. Following his talks with the Commonwealth Secretary, SERETSE gave a press conference, where he disclosed that the British had offered him £1,100 a year tax-free if he would abdicate and settle definitively in England; that, when he had declined the offer, he was given to understand that he was not allowed to return to Bechuana-



land, but should live in exile in London for five years, during which time the question would be reconsidered. The British government banished also TSHEKEDI from Bechuanaland.

As the Bechuana tribes, despite repeated notices, were unwilling to elect another chief in succession to SERETSE, the British government gave up the principle of "indirect rule" it had applied to the Protectorate. First it introduced in Bechuanaland direct government by the colonial authorities for three years, and in 1952, in disregard of the will of the tribe, it arbitrarily appointed RASEBOLAI KGAMANE to the chieftaincy because he was ready to support the British policy. By Bechuana custom KGAMANE could have claimed the chieftaincy only after both SERETSE and TSHEKEDI had deceased. Thus the Bechuana did not accept the appointment as lawful.

Upon expiry of the five years' exile SERETSE KHAMA renounced the chieftaincy both in his name and on behalf of his children, and in October 1956 returned to Bechuanaland, recognized the appointment of KGAMANE and participated in public affairs as a common member of his tribe.

#### *The Bechuanaland Protectorate Federal Party*

At that time political parties did not yet exist in Bechuanaland, but in the second half of the fifties more and more members of the Bechuana tribe were waked up to political consciousness by the news of the great changes occurring in other parts of Black Africa (Sudan, Ghana, Guinea). The first political party was formed in 1959. Its founder, LEETILE DISANG RADITLADI,<sup>1</sup> and his father in 1937 had come into a serious conflict with TSHEKEDI KHAMA, who sent them into exile with the consent of the British government. RADITLADI spent his years of exile in a remote district of the Protectorate (Francistown, Ngamiland), where he was employed in the tribal administration. In 1957 he got permission to return to the Bamangwato reserve, where he soon became Secretary of the Bamangwato Tribal Council and later Subordinate African Authority in the Mahalapye district. In 1959 he founded the Bechuanaland Protectorate Federal Party to work for the political, economic and social emancipation and the unity of the Bechuana tribes with the ultimate aim of a democratic federation. The party, in which eight different Bechuana tribes took part from the outset, demanded first of all the establishment of a legislature and the right to form trade unions and co-operatives.

#### *The Constitution of December 1960 and the Elections in May 1961.*

##### *Formation of the Bechuanaland People's Party*

On December 6, 1960, the British government announced the introduction of a new "Constitution" in Bechuanaland, providing for the establishment of a Legislative Council on the model of the other Protectorates. This Legislative Council had 35 members: with the British Resident Commissioner as Chairman, it consisted of 22 European members (three ex-officio members, another seven appointed officials, two appointed unofficial members and ten Europeans, nearly all merchants, elected

<sup>1</sup> LEETILE DISANG RADITLADI was born at Serowe in 1910. He was a son of a Bamangwato chief's family who were on hostile terms with the Khamas. He went to school in Natal and studied at the Fort Hare College of the Cape.

by the European settlers), two appointed and ten elected African members (who were elected not by popular vote but were chosen by the tribal council from candidates nominated by the chiefs), and one Asian member. In other words, the European minority (3,200) amounting to less than one per cent of the population had 23 members and the African majority (335,000) constituting 99 per cent of the population had 12 members in the Legislative Council.<sup>1</sup> The Executive Council had four unofficial members (2 Europeans and 2 Africans) in addition to six colonial officials who were ex-officio members. But the Executive Council, which was presided over by the Resident Commissioner, was in fact nothing else than an advisory body, for its powers did not go beyond submitting recommendations to the British High Commissioner of South Africa.

The introduction of this travesty of constitution stirred broad masses of the Bechuana. The very day of the above announcement, December 6, 1960, a new political party came into existence — the Bechuanaland People's Party headed by KGALEMAN T. MOTSETE.<sup>2</sup> The party pursued the aim to "mobilize and organize the political consciousness of the people of Bechuanaland", to fight for the abolition of racial discrimination, protect the rights of citizenship of the Bechuana against "foreigners and immigrants", safeguard the integrity and security of the territory. The programme of the new party differed from that of RADITLADI's party mainly in that the latter relied first of all on the chiefs, their activity and traditional influence, while MOTSETE regarded it as the main task of his party to make the broad masses (workers, artisans, poor village tribal headmen) politically active, and thus to free them from the retrograde influence of the chiefs. The party programme contained the following passage:

"Though fully appreciative of the good and opportune service rendered by the ancient institutions of the Chieftainship... in the present circumstances of the stage of the social and political evolution of the mass of the people of Bechuanaland... very great caution and circumspection must be exercised in the event of the nomination of a chief, African Authority, or Subordinate African Authority for the office of President or Vice-President or Secretary-General or for a branch chairmanship."<sup>3</sup>

The elections under the new "Constitution" were held in May 1961. The parties engaged in intense pre-election propaganda. The people protested against the electoral system based on racial discrimination, and in February 1961 staged a protest demonstration displaying placards reading "One man, one vote". But the parties as such could not put up candidates, these being nominated by the chiefs. The British government argued for the exclusion of parties from participation in the elections on the ground that there were in Bechuanaland no such organized political parties as would be fit for the purpose. Though MOTSETE figured in the list of candidates, he was not elected. SERETSE KHAMA, who since his return in 1956 had not been engaged in politics, also ran for election. He was elected and even became a member of the Executive Council.

The British government offered the Bechuana the 1960 "Constitution" as the first step towards independence, and the representatives of the Bechuana accepted

<sup>1</sup> Even if, accepting the misleading interpretation given by the British government, we do not count the colonial officials to be representatives of the European minority, yet the disproportion is striking: 10 representatives for 1 per cent and another 10 for 99 per cent of the population.

<sup>2</sup> KGALEMAN T. MOSTSETE was born at Serowe, went to local schools, and later studied in the Union of South Africa and at London. Returning to Africa, he taught in school first in the Union and in Nyasaland, and later in Bechuanaland.

<sup>3</sup> R. SEGALL, *African Profiles*, p. 48.



it at face value. In spite of this, for two years and a half nothing was done to bring closer the day of independence. The Bechuana political parties, however, did not give up the fight. In February 1962 the Bechuanaland People's Party contacted the Basutoland Congress Party and the Swaziland Progressive Party. At the Mbabane conference<sup>1</sup> the three parties entered into a pact for the struggle against the annexationist aspirations of the South African government.

### *The Formation of New Parties. Conflicts within the Independence Movement*

At the end of 1961 SERETSE KHAMA founded the Bechuanaland Democratic Party. The new political party called for the fight against racial discrimination, took a stand for a national union of the African and non-African population, and demanded the establishment of a Legislative Assembly with an African majority by 1965 at the latest, self-government for the country by 1969, and independence (without a scheduled date).

As can be seen from these demands, the new party followed a very moderate political line. The same is borne out by the fact that while the People's Party tried to get racial policies stopped by boycotting the traders who were applying such practices, the Democratic Party was against boycott. The great personal prestige of SERETSE KHAMA helped the party to gain ground, especially in the provinces, while in the towns the party's moderate policy, its opposition to the proposed boycott, could hardly compete with the more radical policy of the People's Party.

From 1962 the ranks of the People's Party also were torn with internal struggles, in back of which stood both differences of principle (thus, for example, in the question of All-African unity) and personal conflicts. Thus, towards the end of 1962 the Bechuanaland People's Party expelled MPHO. But MPHO contested the legality of his expulsion, claiming that it was not MATANTE and his adherents but he himself and his followers who represented the People's Party, and sued the party for surrender of the party fund and vehicles to him and his associates. Since the court decision was delayed, in the following two years and a half two parallel People's parties existed, one headed by MATANTE, the other by MPHO. Failing to win his suit, MPHO in the early days of 1964 founded the Botswana Independence Party.

In the meantime, however, the Bechuanaland People's Party itself had split into two. MOTSETE expelled MATANTE, who in turn expelled MOTSETE, and from that time on again two People's parties existed simultaneously.

The British imperialists, who posed as defenders of Africans against the racists of South Africa, in their propaganda contrasted the "democratic regime" of the Protectorate with the despotic regime of the government of South Africa. The fact was that, even if they made sometimes a semblance of "democratic" gestures to calm down world public opinion, they did not seriously resist the racist terror.

A special example of this was the two-faced policy followed in the question of South African refugees in Bechuanaland. This country has a single railway line, which connects the Republic of South Africa with Southern Rhodesia. On November 7, 1962, three young Africans who had been arrested in Southern Rhodesia after having fled without passes from South Africa with the intention of going to study on scholarships in America, and who were being deported in handcuffs back to South Africa, were taken off the train by the Bechuanaland police and set free. Two days

<sup>1</sup> See p. 245.

later the police of Southern Rhodesia held up on the same railway line and sent back to South Africa — this time without handcuffs and guards — another group of 28 South African students bound for Tanganyika. In Bechuanaland the students left the train with the consent of the local authorities.<sup>1</sup> After such antecedents it is only more than probable that it was due to a change in the British government's avowed policy upon intervention from the South African government, and for the sake of good relations with the racist bosses of South Africa, that in 1963 the British government (in grave violation of a United Nations resolution) gave permission to the South African secret police to arrest in Bechuanaland and deport back to the Republic of South Africa KENNETH ABRAHMS and his friends who had taken refuge in Bechuanaland from the racist terror, and that British policemen arrested there British subjects Mr. and Mrs. HOGSDON and conveyed them back to England.

### *Bechuana Reactions to Verwoerd's Plan for Annexation*

When, in September 1963 VERWOERD made an offer inviting Bechuanaland to join the Republic of South Africa as one of its "Bantustans", the Bechuana rejected the offer most categorically, irrespective of party affiliation. PHILIP MATANTE, Vice-President of the Bechuanaland People's Party, in early September said this: "Mr. Verwoerd lives in a dreamland. No South African design to change us to one of their Bantustans is of any interest to us. Even if Verwoerd were allowed to send his delegates to negotiate here, we shall refuse to talk to them."

The deputy secretary-general of the other, less radical, Bechuana party, the Bechuanaland Democratic Party, AMOS DAMBE, also flatly refused by saying: "We reject any South African step to annex our country. We want to go our own way, and though we want to maintain good relations with South Africa, we are most resolutely opposed to annexation."

### *The British Resident Commissioner's Agreement with the Bechuana Leaders*

In November 1963 the British Resident Commissioner of Bechuanaland called the leaders of the Bechuanaland parties and the European and Asian members of the Legislative Council to a conference to discuss with them the matter of a constitutional reform he was proposing. The draft constitution, which the Resident Commissioner presented as the charter of self-government of Bechuanaland, envisaged general elections to the legislature by the end of 1964, with franchise granted to all adults without distinction as to race, and a Cabinet of Ministers headed by a Prime Minister.

Members of the Legislative Council, which would be called the National Assembly, were to be elected for a term of five years on the basis of general suffrage. All adult inhabitants of the country would have the right to vote. The President was also to be chosen for five years by a majority of all members of the newly elected National Assembly. The President would be empowered to convene, adjourn or dissolve the National Assembly at any time.

The draft provided also for a separate assembly of chiefs to discuss bills affecting tribal matters. Under this "constitution of self-government", however, external

<sup>1</sup> *The Economist*, Nov. 17, 1962, p. 650.



affairs and finance, defence and internal security as well as the organs of administration remained under the authority of the British Resident Commissioner. This notwithstanding, the Bechuana leaders accepted the draft, obviously because they thought that a small step forward was better than nothing.

It took the British government another half year to announce in a White Paper, published in June 1964, that it definitely sanctioned the draft constitution that had been adopted at the conference of November 1963. However, it remained silent about the date to be set for the entry into force of the new constitution and for the new elections.

#### *Elections in March 1965 and the Formation of Seretse Khama's Government*

After another nine months of procrastination the elections to the National Assembly were held on March 1, 1965. At the elections, in which 189,000 voters (out of the Bechuanaland population of 542,000) took part, SERETSE KHAMA's Bechuanaland Democratic Party won the absolute majority, gaining 28 of 31 seats (the remaining 3 seats went to the People's Party). As a result, the first constitutional government of Bechuanaland was formed with SERETSE KHAMA as Prime Minister. At a press conference the Prime Minister announced that the country's name would be changed to Botswana. As to the relations with the neighbouring countries, he declared that, in spite of the serious differences due to the racial policies of the Republic of South Africa, his country would maintain the commercial relations, because it was poor and needed foreign investments for its own development's sake.

However meagre the newly introduced "constitution" was, the fact that the country at last had a government of its own made it entirely impossible for the British colonialists to maintain the absurd situation they had created in the eighties of the 19th century, that the administrative centre was located outside the country, in the city of Mafeking in the Union (now Republic) of South Africa. As the new administrative centre and seat of government the British now designated the village of Gaberones situated 96 miles north of Mafeking, and the necessary preparations began right away to build up the future capital.

In April 1965 SERETSE KHAMA visited Zambia, and had talks with KAUNDA about closer co-operation between the two countries, notably about improvement of communication between them. Upon his return home he declared that, to lessen economic dependence on South Africa, the country had to develop trade relations with Zambia and other African countries.

On July 9, 1965, PHILIP MATANTE, the leader of the opposition Bechuanaland People's Party occupying three seats in the legislature, submitted a motion of no confidence. He accused the SERETSE KHAMA government of neglecting to subsidize those suffering from the drought and famine,<sup>1</sup> and said that it had to thank the fraudulent conduct of the elections for his majority won in the legislature. He declared

<sup>1</sup> In the summer of 1965 the country was ravaged by famine due to a severe drought. With the consent of the British government, food was purchased from South Africa for \$35,000 every month. Also the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization sent food to Bechuanaland, but it had to pass through South African territory, and so the first shipment reached destination only late in September 1965. The SERETSE KHAMA government's Minister of Public Works and Transport, DAVID MORGAN, in his report of July 15, 1965, complained that, while the country was ravaged by a drought unparalleled for the last thirty years, the British government delayed in providing adequate financial aid to Bechuanaland.

that if his motion should be rejected, he would ask the British government to order a plebiscite to be held. The Prime Minister informed the National Assembly that he was negotiating with the British government for a time-table for independence. He said he was commissioned by the Bechuana people to lead the country to independence without new general elections. MATANTE's motion was rejected on the grounds that the country itself had to draft the constitution of Bechuanaland and to submit it for final approval to the constitutional conference to be held at London in the first half of 1966.

On October 13, 1965, the British Secretary of State for the Colonies announced the British government's agreement to Bechuanaland's becoming independent as of September 30, 1966. Two months later, on December 13, Prime Minister SERETSE KHAMA repeated the same announcement at a meeting of the Bechuanaland Parliament, to which most of the chiefs were invited. At the same time the Prime Minister tabled a draft constitution of the independent Bechuana state. Under this act the country should be renamed Botswana and would continue to be a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations, the Prime Minister would be promoted to the office of President of the Republic, and the Deputy Prime Minister would become Vice-President of the Republic.

#### *Negotiations in London in February 1966*

On December 30, 1965, it was made known that the British government called a constitutional conference to London for discussing a time-table for independence.

The constitutional conference, which took place in London between February 14 and 21, 1966, resulted in the signing of an agreement by which Bechuanaland should become the sovereign state of Botswana on September 30, 1966, and as such should join the British Commonwealth. The conference discussed and approved the new constitution which the Bechuanaland legislative organs had drawn up and accepted. The constitution was adopted unanimously. Only one member of the Bechuanaland delegation (MATANTE) objected to the agreement and proposed further consultations instead of setting a date for independence, but since his motion was rejected, he left the conference and refused to sign the agreement. In virtue of the constitution the state is headed by a President, who is elected through plebiscite or by the National Assembly, and who continues in office until the people or the National Assembly has elected a new President to succeed him. The President is in one person head of state and of government and commander-in-chief of the army; he shall appoint the Deputy Prime Minister and six additional members of the government, who are all answerable to him, not to the National Assembly. In consultation with the members of his government, the President rules at discretion. Besides the National Assembly superseding the Legislative Council, the constitution upholds, as a second chamber of parliament, the House of Chiefs which consists of 15 members (8 chiefs ex officio and 7 by election, instead of 4 as before), and which has the power only to give its opinion on certain matters, but which has neither the right of veto nor the right to stay the implementation of the laws adopted by the National Assembly.

The acceptance by the British government of this utterly authoritarian constitution is a direct consequence of the far-reaching assistance which the British government provides to SERETSE KHAMA. The reason why the British government, which in the past forced SERETSE KHAMA into exile, regards him as its own man is to be



found in his moderate policy and also in the fact that, owing to the geographical and economic conditions of the country and in spite of the racist regime raging in the Republic of South Africa, the government of Botswana is compelled to cultivate good relations with the South African government, since it is economically wholly dependent on the Republic. (Most of the exports go to South Africa, and 80 per cent of the food supplies and industrial products are imported from that country. About 25 per cent of the workers of Bechuanaland are employed in the Republic. The currency of Botswana is the South African *rand*.) That SERETSE KHAMA is fully aware of this economic dependence is shown by the statement he made at the time of his arrival in London for the constitutional conference. He said then that accession to independence could by no means influence his country's trade with South Africa, and that after independence the European settlers would enjoy the same rights as the Africans.

Still before the opening of the constitutional conference, in the early days of February, SERETSE KHAMA's government concluded an air agreement with South Africa on regular air transport services between the two countries. (The Bechuanaland National Airways subsidized by the government operated regular services also with Southern Rhodesia and Zambia.) After the conference, on February 22, the Prime Minister announced: as South Africa would probably not wish to exchange diplomatic representatives with Botswana, the interests of the country in South Africa would also in the future be represented by the United Kingdom. He said at the same time that Botswana would not apply strictly the passport regulations against those wishing to enter the country — meaning the South African refugees.

That the British government on its part did not reckon with the opinion of the leaders of the Bechuana people is clearly shown by the fact that, when in November 1965 the usurping racist minority government of Rhodesia arbitrarily proclaimed the independence of Southern Rhodesia, the British government, despite protests from SERETSE KHAMA and the opposition parties, established a British radio station in Francistown and dispatched 120 British troops to guard the buildings.

SERETSE KHAMA's Bechuanaland Democratic Party held its annual conference at Mochudi in April 1966. The conference approved SERETSE KHAMA's proposal for the country to join the British Commonwealth of Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the United Nations and to establish friendly relations with Basutoland and Swaziland. It equally endorsed the motion that the government should adopt the policy of non-interference in the domestic affairs of other states, and maintain good relations with the neighbouring countries. At the same time the conference emphasized that non-interference and good-neighbour relations did not mean that Bechuanaland should refrain from condemning "in the strongest possible terms any inhuman policies which may obtain in such states".

On June 14, 1966, the first local elections in Bechuanaland ended in a sweeping victory of SERETSE KHAMA's Bechuanaland Democratic Party.

Still at the end of June the British government appointed the first British High Commissioner for Bechuanaland which was to become independent on September 30, 1966.

On September 30, 1966, Bechuanaland became the independent state of Botswana. At the independence celebrations the Queen of England was represented by Princess MARINA and British Resident Commissioner NORMAN WALKER, who officially handed state power over to SERETSE KHAMA.

On the day before the proclamation of independence the colonial police in the northern part of the country arrested six armed South West African freedom fighters

who wanted to pass through Bechuanaland to go home and assist their compatriots in combating the raging police terror.

That same day the British Commissioner took leave of the Bechuana population by promising the new state joining the Commonwealth "every possible assistance" from the British government.

The Parliament meeting in which the documents of independence were presented was attended by representatives from fifty foreign states, including the United States of America, which on this occasion made a gift of a two-engined airplane to the government of the new state, and the Republic of South Africa, whose Foreign Minister presented the government of Botswana with a set of furniture (!).

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## BASUTOLAND

*"Ritual Murders" in Basutoland and the Related British Provocations*

Basutoland, whose people — still before and during the war — had been the first among the three Protectorates to start a struggle for independence, in the early post-war years became the scene of appalling events. The British press, and in its wake the world press, carried sensational reports one after another on the mass occurrence of ritual murders in Basutoland.<sup>1</sup> The British colonial authorities arrested hundreds of persons on the charge of such murders and executed 67 of those convicted, including two chief personalities of the Basuto nation.<sup>2</sup>

As the Lekhotla la Bafo leaders (who had been released after the war's end) were also arrested, the organization appealed for help to the Rev. MICHAEL SCOTT who happened to stay in Johannesburg. From the talks conducted on the spot with members of the organization and numerous other representatives of the Basuto people, among them chiefs and Regent Chieftainess MANTSEBO SEEISO herself,<sup>3</sup> as well as with a number of missionaries, and from the written reports he had received, MICHAEL SCOTT found out that many innocent people were among those arrested; that agents of the British authorities had tortured them for days and weeks and even months on end, thus compelling them to testify against the chiefs spotted by the authorities, and to charge the chiefs with the organization of the ritual murders.

<sup>1</sup> According to the JONES report altogether 93 "medicine murders" occurred between 1895 and 1949. According to BASIL DAVIDSON the number of ritual murders was 9 in 1945, 2 in 1946, 12 in 1947, and 20 in 1948.

<sup>2</sup> This figure is taken from JOHN GUNTHER (*Inside Africa*, p. 571). The actual number of executions was most possibly far greater.

<sup>3</sup> From 1913 till 1939 the Paramount Chief of the Basuto tribes was MOSHEU's grandson, GRIFFITH. He had two sons (by two different wives), SEEISO and BERENG. Upon his death SEEISO succeeded to the paramountcy but died a year later (he is said to have been poisoned). His only son (by his wife MABERENG), BERENG SEEISO, was one-year-old at that time. By Basuto custom SEEISO's half-brother, BERENG, should have been proclaimed Paramount. But SEEISO's senior widow, MANTSEBO SEEISO, managed to persuade the chiefs to agree that, by ignoring BERENG, the paramountcy be held by her as Regent until BERENG SEEISO reached full age. BERENG who was thus excluded, and Principal Chief GABASHANE who ranked next in the chiefs' hierarchy (and who at the time was favouring SEEISO and, after the latter's death, backed up MANTSEBO SEEISO's claim but, having fallen out with her, took the side of BERENG), challenged MANTSEBO SEEISO's right to the paramountcy. BERENG requested the British authorities to remove MANTSEBO SEEISO. But the majority of the chiefs having sided with her, the Privy Council rejected the request. In 1953 the British authorities, in disregard of the Regent's protest, took 15-year-old BERENG SEEISO to attend the coronation ceremonies in London, where he pursued his studies until his return in January 1960.



Here are a few passages from the written complaints presented to SCOTT:

"As I write this Kelebone Rametse is in jail where he is being tortured to say that he and the members of the Lekhotla la Bafo went to burn Roma College..."<sup>1</sup>

"It was suggested to me that I should say that the chief offered me money to kill the deceased. For four and a half months the police hammered this into me. By hammering I mean that repeated suggestions were made. I was also told that if I accepted this suggestion I should not be charged with murder. My feet suffered from the cold which was in the cell. I had only one blanket."<sup>2</sup>

"I was also mentally tortured by being told that the chief had confiscated my lands and my cattle had been killed and that the police were going over to my place to have a nice time there and to eat up all the meat. On another occasion I was told that my wife had been assaulted with sticks and had many injuries and was in hospital but that I could not go and see her there."<sup>3</sup>

Relying on what he had seen and heard, SCOTT took the petition of Chieftainess MANTSEBO SEEISO and presented it in person to the British Resident Commissioner. In her petition the Regent requested an inquiry. Then SCOTT, on his part, sent a cable to the British Minister of State for Commonwealth Affairs, requesting that a careful investigation be made. As the Minister did not respond, SCOTT later, upon his return to London in December 1948, repeated his request in a memorandum presented in person to Commonwealth Minister NOEL-BAKER (Labour Party), calling his attention to the emergency, since in a number of instances, including cases against some chiefs, death sentences had already been pronounced, from which appeal had been laid to the Privy Council in London. The Minister did not take action until a few months later, when the Privy Council had confirmed the death sentences, and even then he sent out no commission of inquiry, but appointed one person, the anthropologist G. I. JONES of Cambridge, to investigate into the affair. His appointment was not made known in advance to the local authorities, which thus, in the early morning following JONES's arrival, executed the chiefs sentenced to death.

To the next, fourth, session of the United Nations General Assembly (1949) the British government submitted its annual report on non-self-governing territories without even mentioning the Basutoland events, the dozens of death sentences. The letter of complaint of the Lekhotla la Bafo, which SCOTT forwarded to TRYGVE LIE, Secretary-General of the United Nations, also went unheeded.

The JONES report was not made public until two years later (1951), when the victims (those both of the murders and of the British police terror) were mouldering in their graves. The report did nothing to clear the "mystery" of the medicine murders. The author of the report listed a few dozen cases as they were presented by the local authorities. In his eagerness the learned author, outbidding even the authorities (and without being able to adduce anything in proof of his allegations), cast upon Regent MANTSEBO SEEISO the shadow of suspicion of complicity in the murders. As for the doings of the colonial police and court, he neither looked into them (he probably did not even have the powers to do so) nor referred to the necessity of their examination, not even in the cases (concerning first of all the afore-mentioned chiefs) in which the frame-up was evidenced by a multitude of proven facts (data

<sup>1</sup> M. SCOTT, *A Time to Speak*, p. 196.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 200.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 200-201.

collected by SCOTT, testimonies from a number of tortured Basutos, statements by missionaries).<sup>1</sup>

The ritual murders in Basutoland are a fact, but the Basutos and the missionaries whom SCOTT had talked with unanimously denied that murders had occurred as often as the authorities alleged, and they emphasized that the large majority of the population had no part at all in those murders and even worried about the state of affairs. "There is the truth that Ritual Murders are existent in Basutoland, but instead of investigating the matter and catching the culprits it has become the reason for implicating innocent people."<sup>2</sup>

No doubt the roots of the ritual murders are to be found, first of all, in the primitive religious traditions and superstitions of the culturally backward Basuto tribes. "Superstition is the root problem to be tackled. Until the belief in charms and in the power of the witch-doctor to exercise them is removed, there will continue to be such barbaric practices."<sup>3</sup>

In the view of many, including several Protestant missionaries, a contributing factor in the spread of ritual murders, besides the primitive religious superstitions of Africans, was the distorted interpretation of the Christian faith forced upon the Africans by the colonizers.

"The ritual murders, some believed, were a terrible perversion of the most sacred mystery in our holy religion, the sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ. Even some Protestant Christians whose advice I had sought had suggested it was an inevitable consequence of teaching 'medieval notions' to Africans."<sup>4</sup>

In another place SCOTT quotes the words of the afore-mentioned Basuto university graduate who, with reference to the Christian rite in which the priest blesses the seed corn, said: "When it is considered that the witch-doctor's methods are very similar in form to these, it will be appreciated that there is the possibility of misunderstanding arising about the purpose and function of ritual in the Christian sense."<sup>5</sup>

The JONES report sees the origin of the frequent occurrence of ritual murders in the fight fought between chiefs and would-be chiefs, in the rivalry for the chiefs' posts and the resulting benefits. It may well be that these rivalries had contributed to the increase of ritual murders, by inducing some chiefs to make use of the superstitious beliefs still held by part of the people for their own ends. But to ascribe the ritual murders and their frequency entirely to these rivalries is an absolutely unwarranted and tendentious explanation. For if there might be some doubt about the ritual murders, there is no room for doubt about the methods of terror and the executions resorted to by the police and in general by the British colonial authorities under the pretext of "detecting" the murders and punishing the murderers, or about the aims they pursued by doing so.

<sup>1</sup> That JOHN GUNTHER relates the case of the Basutoland ritual murders on the basis of the JONES report, uncritically accepting this official document as reliable, is not surprising at all. What is rather strange and more regrettable, however, is that such an earnest and objective author as the excellent BASIL DAVIDSON commits the same error: he also refers to this shameless document and calls it a "lucid report". (B. DAVIDSON, *Report on Southern Africa*, London, 1952, p. 220.)

<sup>2</sup> From the letter in which the Lekhotla la Bafo asked SCOTT for help. In SCOTT, *op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>3</sup> These are the words of a Basuto graduate from London University. See SCOTT, *op. cit.*, p. 199.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 204.

<sup>5</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 200.



SCOTT mentions that "Some, including the accused, . . . allege that the cases have been framed against them by the police, and the bodies of those who have been assaulted and robbed 'planted' on their land", and refers to the opinion of an African clergyman, an Anglican priest, according to whom the accusations were extremely improbable, considering that the "evidence" almost always came from the accomplices.<sup>1</sup>

Both the methods employed by the police and the role of the British colonial authorities are brought to light by three striking cases SCOTT had the occasion to get to know personally.

(1) *The case of the Lekhotla la Bafo*. This organization, which was fighting against the annexation of Basutoland to the Union of South Africa, had long been a thorn in the flesh of the police composed mostly of "White" South Africans. The police had long been waiting for an opportunity to pit the population against the organization. The strained situation created by the ritual murders seemed particularly suited for the purpose. The pretext for starting action against the organization was provided by a case of fire. A fire broke out in the dormitory of the Roma Mission College, and four African children perished in the flames. The missionaries testified that the fire had been caused by short circuit. Weeks after the event the police arrested the leaders of the Lekhotla la Bafo on the charge of murder and arson. Torturing for weeks on end brought one of the leaders to testify against the others. This person later escaped or was released, and got back to his village where he related that while in jail he had been forced by torture to make a false statement against his accomplices. The police got wind of this talk and again imprisoned the man, who then recanted what he had said at home and confirmed his previous testimony.

(2) *The case of Chiefs Gabashane and Bereng*. Two principal chiefs, GABASHANE and BERENG, were arrested on the charge of participation in ritual murders. Both were Christian and were generally respected. (SCOTT mentions that he received a letter from a retired Anglican bishop who knew GABASHANE well and, believing in his innocence, wanted to apply for a reopening of the case.) On the strength of confessions extorted from them by torture they were sentenced to death and, as we have seen above, were executed in the morning after JONES's arrival. In the general view of the Basuto population, the reason why they had to die was that, as respected chiefs, they had used their influence among the masses to arouse the people's protest against the Union government's efforts to annex the Protectorates. GABASHANE was known also to have led a protest drive against the British plan for expropriation of tribal lands with a view to building a road to the Union of South Africa. On the other hand, the British government endeavoured at that time to improve its relations with the Nationalist government of the Union, and thought the best means to this end was to encourage the Nationalist efforts at annexation.

(3) *The case of Chieftainess Mamakhabane*. One of the most striking cases was that of MAMAKHABANE, a Christian chieftainess, who was arrested, sentenced and executed for the assassination of a man by name MOCHESELA. Several people were arrested in the case and accused of the murder. The police made the arrests on the testimony of a certain JUSTINUS RATSIU, who, having been in jail at the time of the murder, had no way of knowing about its circumstances. The arrested were then put under torture to get them to testify against one another. A written memorandum sent to SCOTT tells about the fate of four of the arrested persons as follows:

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

"1. Raletsukana Posholi was put under torture for 54 days after he had declined the offer of £20 by the Police Corporal Michael if he would state that the deceased Mochesela was killed by the order of Chieftainess Mamakhabane.

"2. Mashapha Pokoyane was offered £80 plus an income of £3 per month by the police officer if he would state that Chieftainess Mamakhabane ordered that the deceased should be murdered. When he refused to make the false statement he was taken to the house where they are tortured where he was kept for over two months of sufferings.

"3. Steyn Sebajoa was also tortured for over a month after he had declined the offer to implicate Chieftainess Mamakhabane falsely.

"4. Mosala Kolotsane was forced for a month and three days to implicate Chieftainess Mamakhabane and was threatened that he would otherwise be killed."<sup>1</sup>

In the first two of these cases it is wholly clear that the British authorities wanted in this way to rid themselves of the Lekhotla la Bafo and its influential African leaders, for they were a nuisance to the British government and a special threat to the Union government. The same holds of another case related by SCOTT, that of the son of an Indian trader who was arrested on the charge of having loaned a motor lorry to help in a plot to burn down the mission school which, as we have seen before, according to the missionaries caught fire by a short circuit. The real cause of the arrest was that the person in question had taken part in the Natal passive resistance movement.<sup>2</sup>

The provocations and acts of terrorism carried out by the British colonial administration in connection with the ritual murders greatly contributed towards increasing the political consciousness and activity of the Basuto tribes,<sup>3</sup> so much so that the British government felt compelled, if it wished to curb the ever strengthening independence aspirations, to give — or to promise, for the time being — at least a semblance of self-government to the Basuto people.

### *The Basuto People's Struggle for Independence*

In 1952 NTSU MOKHEHLE<sup>4</sup> founded a political organization called the Basutoland African Congress. The aim of the organization was to achieve the independence of the country. As a first step it demanded the establishment of an elected legislative council.

<sup>1</sup> SCOTT made the following comment on this case: "The leading accused was a Roman Catholic chieftainess and the story, if the allegations were true, forms a terrible commentary on a hundred years of Christian missionary effort in that territory." *Op. cit.*, pp. 196-197.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 201.

<sup>3</sup> Here is a passage from the letter of the Lekhotla la Bafo to SCOTT: "Are we still protected? It has come to that stage where it seems that the Government is no more protecting us but killing us. It seems that the Government is trying means of taking Basutoland solely for itself in the near future." *Op. cit.*, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup> NTSU MOKHEHLE is a son of a well-to-do Basuto stock-farmer and school inspector. He was born in December 1918 at a village in the North of Basutoland. He attended school in his native village, and later went to a mission school in South Africa. In 1940 he went to Fort Hare College, which in 1942 expelled him for his political activity (organization of student strikes). On his return to Basutoland he took part in the underground activity of the League of the Common Man. In 1944 he went back to Fort Hare College, where he took his degree in zoology. He was an active member of the African National Congress Youth League. In 1949 he obtained his education diploma from Fort Hare College and returned to Basutoland.



Still in 1952 MOKHEHLE and KHAKETLA<sup>1</sup> founded a newspaper, *Mohlabe* (The Warrior), through which they soon won broad circles over to the political struggle for a radical constitutional reform.

That same year the British government appointed a Commission under HENRY MOORE to draft a "Constitution" of Basutoland. In its report published in 1954 the Commission proposed, instead of the establishment of a legislative body, only some enlargement of the powers of the Basutoland National Council.<sup>2</sup> The Basutoland African Congress and the politically conscious strata of the population received the MOORE proposals with indignation, so that the Basutoland National Council had to reject them. In 1955 the Council sent out a new constitutional committee with the participation of G. D. COWEN, Professor of law at the University of Cape Town.

In 1956 a split occurred in the ranks of the Basutoland African Congress. Chief MATETE,<sup>3</sup> an early member of the Congress, who since 1954 had been an adviser of Regent MANTSEBO SEEISO and since 1955 a member of the COWEN Committee, fell out with the Regent, stepped down as an adviser, and launched propaganda for the earliest possible return and installation of the young Paramount Chief BERENG SEEISO.<sup>4</sup> As he had failed to win the Congress movement for this objective, he withdrew from the Congress and founded the "Marema Tlou" (Unity Party) with the explicit aim of pressing for the return of BERENG SEEISO and winning for him the support of the Basuto nation.

In 1957 the British government again gave evidence of its readiness to support the racist government of South Africa in its aspirations concerning Basutoland: it appointed to the post of Resident Commissioner of Basutoland a South African official. Regent MANTSEBO SEEISO (the same whom JONES in his report accused of participation in ritual murders), when she went to London to protest against this appointment, was given a cool reception, and the British government chose the very time of her presence there to announce the conclusion of an agreement with the Minister of Defence of the Union of South Africa, authorizing the Union air force to fly over the territory of Basutoland.

<sup>1</sup> BENNET MAKALO KHAKETLA was born the son of a peasant family at Quacha's Nek in South West Basutoland in 1913. He went to local mission schools and qualified as a teacher. Studying privately he obtained his B.A. degree (in politics and the Sesotho language) from the University of South Africa, then was a clerk-typist and teacher in South Africa. In 1946 he returned to Maseru and taught there until 1949, when he was dismissed because of staff reduction. He worked for a while in the British colonial administration, and then again went to the Union where he taught in school until his return to Basutoland in 1952.

<sup>2</sup> The Basutoland National Council was formed as a consultative body as far back as 1910. Its chairman was the British Resident Commissioner, assisted by the Paramount of the Basutos as chief adviser. Beside him, the Council had 99 members, of whom 94 were nominated by the Paramount and 5 by the British Resident. From 1943 onwards some of the members were chosen by the "district councils" established in that year and composed mostly of elected members.

<sup>3</sup> SEEPHEPHE SAMUEL MATETE was born the son of a chieftain's family at Quacha's Nek in South West Basutoland in 1918. He studied at Adam's College in Natal. From 1940 till 1946 he worked in the British colonial administration. After his father's death in 1946 he acceded to the chieftaincy. He was an elected member of the Basutoland National Council and a member of the Basutoland African Congress since its foundation.

<sup>4</sup> BERENG SEEISO, the Paramount Chief of the Basutos, was born in 1939. He was the son of GRIFFITH SEEISO, a direct descendant of MOSHEU's, who had created the Basuto nation. He went to Basutoland mission schools, and then studied philosophy, politics and economics at Oxford. (See footnote on p. 267.)

At the same time negotiations were conducted on concessions to be given to South African companies for mineral prospection in Basutoland (and this despite the strong opposition of the Basutos).

The COWEN Committee presented its report in July 1958. It proposed an eighty-member Legislative Council and a ten-member Executive Council with the proviso that half of the members of the Legco should be elected by the district councils<sup>1</sup> constituted through direct vote, the other half being nominated members, and that the Executive Council should have four English and four Basuto members besides the British Resident and the Basuto Paramount Chief. To discuss the recommendations of the Committee, the British government started talks in London with representatives of the Basutoland National Council, who accepted the proposals, and the new Constitution was enacted in September 1959.

The elections were held in January 1960. Before the elections, towards the end of 1959, the Basutoland African Congress — which, though finding the constitutional reform unsatisfactory, accepted it as a prelude to democracy — changed its name to Basutoland Congress Party (B.C.P.). The party demanded land reform, made propaganda for industrial development, and called for the removal of all reactionary elements who stood in the way of guiding the Protectorate towards political and economic independence.

Equally in 1959 the Basutoland National Party was formed by Chief LEABUA JONATHAN<sup>2</sup>. This new party, which was founded with the help of the locally very influential Roman Catholic Church, followed a conservative policy and accused the Congress Party of hampering the chiefs in their activities, of undermining traditional tribalism, and of raising excessive demands.

As the result of the elections the B.C.P. captured 73 out of the 162 seats on the district councils (the National Party obtained 22, the Unity Party 16, the Independents 51); of the 40 elective African seats in the Legislative Council 29 went to the B.C.P., 1 to the National Party, 5 to the Unity Party and 5 to the Independents.

Shortly after the elections (at the end of January 1960) 22-year-old CONSTANTINUS BERENG SEEISO, the legitimate paramount of the Basutos, who had until then pursued his studies at Oxford, returned to his country and on February 4 was ceremoniously installed in his office.

The year 1961 in Basutoland was the year of change both in the labour movement and in the independence movement.

The first trade union in the country, the Basutoland Workers Union, had formed in 1959. In 1961 there were already several unions, which were held together by the Basutoland Trades Union Congress affiliated to the Pan-African Trade Union Federation established at Casablanca in 1961. In March 1961 the Basuto workers staged a general strike. The strike was sparked off by the sacking of a workwoman. The workers demanded that she be taken back, and, after the employers declined, they went on strike. The police arrested the union president, JACK MOSLANE, and set a mob armed with sticks on the strikers. However, the workers stuck it out and achieved

<sup>1</sup> The district councils had altogether 162 members, who functioned as electoral college at the election of the Legislative Council. At the election of district councils the right to vote was granted to every adult taxpayer, that is only to the male African population.

<sup>2</sup> Basuto Chief LEABUA JONATHAN, a great-grandson of MOSHEU's, was born in the Leribe district in 1914. He had no school education. For a time he was in the service of the Paramount Chief, and later became president of the Basuto tribal court and worked also for the judicial apparatus of the colonial administration. In 1956, as a member of the Basutoland National Council, he took part in the work of the COWEN Committee.



their aim in the end, but after the strike they continued fighting — this time for economic benefits: higher wages, better working and housing conditions. The British colonial authorities, to intimidate the workers, put 600 Africans into prison and started a "purge", allegedly, to remove the "agitators" inciting the African masses. From Maseru, capital of the territory, they deported to the province all Africans who happened to be looking for jobs in the town.

In June 1961 the Basutoland African Congress Youth League organized in Maseru a protest march of thousands of people under the slogans of the National Congress. The police arrested several of the demonstrators.

In autumn 1961 representatives of the Basuto people went to London, where they had talks with British government agencies, demanding the establishment of a legislative body based on universal suffrage, the formation of a government answerable to the legislative body, the elimination of racial discrimination, and the fixing of minimum wages. The British government promised to appoint a commission to revise the constitution of Basutoland.

In October 1961 the British colonial authorities arrested and sent to exile a member of the Congress Party, J. M. MOKITIMI. After the High Court, without passing a decision, adjourned his hearing of appeal on November 1, MOKITIMI attempted to escape from the court house, but the police caught him. When he was handcuffed and carried off in a police car, an excited crowd of about one hundred, which had assembled around the court house, defied the police sent out to disperse them. As a result of the incident, the police wounded five Africans, two of them seriously. Sixteen demonstrators were arrested and committed to trial. In addition to participating in the riot, they were charged with the intention of burning down the Roman Catholic church.

The Lesotho (Basutoland) Communist Party was founded in November 1961 and held its statutory meeting on March 14, 1962. In the programme worked out at the meeting the party proclaimed struggle for Basutoland's complete political and economic independence, for the establishment of a democratic system of government, for the raising of the living and cultural standards of the Basuto people. The programme emphasized that the party would demand the liquidation of all vestiges; of the colonial system, insist that Lesotho be immediately changed to a democratic state, apply for admission to membership in the United Nations, maintain friendly contacts, diplomatic and commercial relations with all countries, including Great Britain, but first of all with the independent African states; as for the relations with the Republic of South Africa, the party would demand that the Republic unconditionally recognize the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lesotho, and that employers in the Republic pay adequate wages, guarantee labour safety and the trade-union rights; it would further demand that negotiations be started with a view to ensuring Lesotho an access to the sea in return for the territories which British imperialism unlawfully had annexed to the Republic.

It was stressed in the programme: "We can rely first of all on our own strength and unity, and for this purpose the Basutos need complete independence and self-government, including command of the defence forces, control of foreign policies, internal security, postal services, the air routes, and any area usually controlled by independent governments. Secondly we have to rely on our most immediate allies, our oppressed brethren and sisters in the Republic of South Africa, who fight against a common enemy — aggressive South African white imperialism."

To achieve its aim the party declared its readiness to co-operate in a united front with the B.C.P. and other progressive forces, and to maintain close friendly relations

with the progressive movements of the Republic of South Africa, first of all with the South African Communist Party and the African National Congress.

In December 1960 a split occurred in the Basutoland Congress Party. KHAKETLA left the party and in April 1961, joining hands with other ex-members of the B.C.P. (who had resigned or been expelled), formed the Basutoland Freedom Party. The reason they gave for the break with the B.C.P. was that dictatorial methods prevailed in the party leadership and that the party had turned against the established chiefs. Even if these accusations were to a certain extent well founded, the break was still more due to the difference of opinion between the B.C.P. and the followers of KHAKETLA on the issue of whom and what the Basuto people would have to rely upon for the protection of their independence, once they achieved it, and for their free development. While the B.C.P. meant by independence the liberation of the country from colonialist influence, the Freedom Party in its manifesto published at the time of its formation set as one of its main tasks "to inspire the confidence of overseas financiers and technicians whose money and skills are needed so urgently by the Basuto people".<sup>1</sup>

The tenth annual conference of the Basutoland Congress Party held at Maseru in December 1961 confirmed MOKHEHLE as party president for another five years and authorized the Executive Committee to dissolve any one of the party branches which did not defer to the party's policy.

In May 1962 one of the leaders of the Basuto National Party, after a visit to President NASSER in Cairo, went to New York. On behalf of his party he presented a petition to the United Nations Special Committee on decolonization. The petition demanded that (1) Basutoland be declared a UN trust territory, (2) members of the UN provide financial and technical assistance (in form of aid and loan) to the economic development of Basutoland, (3) defensive measures be taken to secure the territorial integrity of Basutoland against threatening aggression by South Africa, and (4) negotiations be started for the return to Basutoland of her territories held by the Republic of South Africa.<sup>2</sup>

During his visit to Cairo in October 1962, the general secretary of the Basuto National Party said: "The people of Basutoland demand independence by June next year . . . At present the situation in our country is strained. The British imperialists want to drag out the proclamation of the independence of Basutoland until 1990, but we shall definitely win independence with the assistance of Asian and African peoples."

In January 1963 the Basutoland Congress Party and shortly thereafter the Basutoland Freedom Party and the Basuto National Party held conferences.<sup>3</sup> Despite the differences of opinion between them, the keynote was the same in the conference debates and resolutions of all three parties: demand for independence for Basutoland, condemnation of the policy of apartheid of the government of South Africa, criticism of the British government's delaying the granting of independence and lending effective support to the South African government. Delegates to all three conferences

<sup>1</sup> R. SEGALL, *Political Africa*, p. 306.

<sup>2</sup> See UN document A/AC. 109/PET.7, 3 May 1962.

<sup>3</sup> British imperialist propaganda accused all three organizations of the Basutoland independence movement of receiving support from foreign powers. It alleged that the Freedom Party was backed by Moscow, the Congress Party by Peking, and the National Party by the South African government. It was due to this propaganda that in January 1966 the appearance of a Chinese in Maseru caused a great panic — until it turned out that the person in question was a staff member of the Johannesburg consulate of the Chiang Kai-shek regime.



renewed the old demand of the Basutos that the Republic of South Africa should give them back about 5,000 square miles of highly fertile land along the northern and western frontiers of Basutoland, an area which had been severed from the country by the Orange Republic in the nineteenth century.

The conference of the B.C.P. was attended, among others, by 150 Basuto workers employed in the Republic of South Africa. Upon their return to South Africa, the South African frontier police arrested them all on the charge of bearing no passes or being in arrears with their taxes. At the same time the South African government announced the establishment of 60 new police stations at the borders of the three Protectorates to check entries through the frontier.

The constitutional commission which the British government had promised to appoint as early as the autumn of 1961, was set up with considerable delay and submitted its report in October 1963. This report proposed the establishment of a legislative body built on the system of universal suffrage as well as the introduction of self-government from 1964, and the granting of full independence in 1965. On the basis of the report the British government in spring of 1964 called another "constitutional conference" to London to work out the system of self-government of Basutoland and to fix the date of accession to independence. The conference, which lasted from April 20 to May 15, 1964, drafted and adopted a new constitution for Basutoland. According to this, Basutoland should elect a sixty-member legislative assembly and receive a senate composed of 22 chiefs and 11 senators nominated by the paramount chief. These bodies were called to exercise self-government until the country would become independent in one year from the date of the elections to be held under the new constitution. The paramount chief of the Basutos, BERENG SEEISO, who should become head of state after independence, was recognized as representative of the Queen for the transition period. The self-government introduced in this way was a rather anemic affair: the British colonial authorities continued to handle, not only foreign affairs and defence, but also the services of home security and the public offices. And the setting of the date of independence was omitted since no date was scheduled for the elections.

Months went by, and the British government still delayed in fixing the election date.

Shortly after the London conference (in the early days of June) an attempt was made on the life of the general secretary of the Basutoland Communist Party, JOHN MOTLOHELA, who suffered light injuries.

At a press conference held in London in August 1964 NTSU MOKHEHLE, president of the Basutoland Congress Party, declared that Great Britain did not fulfil the agreement on the granting of independence to Basutoland which had been concluded in May in London between the Basuto leaders and Secretary of State for Commonwealth Affairs SANDYS. By delaying the elections and thereby the proclamation of independence, the British government was playing into the hands of the racist government of the Republic of South Africa. And Labour M.P. FENNER BROCKWAY, chairman of the British Movement for Colonial Freedom, wrote SANDYS a letter in which, referring to the May agreement, he stated that, even if the elections were postponed, Basutoland should become independent in 1965.

The British government's main argument in support of its procrastination has always been that Basutoland is incapable of independence because it cannot stand on its economic feet, on the one hand, without the market and job openings offered by South Africa and, on the other, without the material support received from the British government. We come across this same argument everywhere in writings

on Basutoland by hundreds of scholars and journalists. But the argument is incorrect.

The reference to material support from the British government is quite ridiculous. The Basuto National Party leaders in their petition presented to the United Nations in April 1962 made the pertinent remark:

"The British have governed this territory for the last century without developing a single economic project.<sup>1</sup> Basutoland has been turned into a breeding ground of half starved slaves who would work as 'cheap labour' to keep 'Kaffirs Lively' on the London stock exchange."<sup>2</sup>

Basutoland's economic dependence on the Republic of South Africa is really a serious problem. The fact is (and the British colonizers are to be blamed for it) that for many decades Basutoland has been economically dependent on the Union (now Republic) of South Africa. In 1962 South Africa employed more than 120,000 Basutos (about half the male population capable of work), who in one year took home, when leaving their jobs, nearly \$2.2 million in form of money remittances or payments received as wages withheld until then. It is also a fact that, of the total revenue of the Protectorate which in the financial year 1963/64 amounted to \$5.9 million, \$2.7 million came from the Protectorate's share in the customs duties and taxes on the barter trade with South Africa.

It is, however, entirely unfounded to suppose that the independence of Basutoland could necessarily mean putting an end to the economic contacts with the Republic of South Africa. Basuto politicians, while condemning the apartheid policies of the South African government and resolutely resisting its efforts at annexation, after accession to independence do not at all intend to break the economic relations with the Republic of South Africa, but rather they would like to develop them. NTSU MOKHEHLE, the leader of the Basutoland Congress Party, said on November 26, 1963:

"We want to negotiate on an equal footing with the Republic [of South Africa] on matters of common interest such as labour... We are fundamentally opposed to apartheid and all its implications, but the South Africans are our neighbours and on economic matters, for instance, we might, when independent, be able to sit down together with Dr. Verwoerd to discuss solutions for our respective problems."<sup>3</sup>

That this conception of the Basuto politician is by no means a utopia is supported also by the report in which the 1963 constitutional commission stated that it "does not regard economic considerations as an obstacle to political independence."<sup>4</sup> Moreover, it pointed to two concrete ways in which Basutoland after independence might settle its economic relations with the Republic of South Africa with due regard to the interests of both countries:

"Lesotho (Basutoland) is the natural source of water and power supply for a vast area of Southern Africa. And there can be no doubt that the need for them in the Republic of South Africa will become increasingly insistent. It is manifest, moreover,

<sup>1</sup> A characteristic fact: For centuries the British colonialists have built no roads in the country. The only highway of the territory (over three miles leading from the Maseru railway station into the town) was built for the occasion of King George VI's visit to Basutoland in 1947.

<sup>2</sup> UN document A/AC.109/PET.7, 3 May 1962.

<sup>3</sup> *The New York Herald Tribune*, Nov. 27, 1963.

<sup>4</sup> *The New York Herald Tribune*, Jan. 8, 1964.



that the use of these commodities in Lesotho, and the sale of a big potential surplus in South Africa, could galvanize and transform Lesotho's whole economy."<sup>1</sup>

#### *Persecution of South African Refugees in Basutoland*

After withdrawal from the British Commonwealth and the proclamation of the Republic the police terror went on increasing in South Africa. Lots of South African freedom fighters who were in danger of life or risked imprisonment fled to the neighbouring British possessions. But the South African police, often by violating the frontier, penetrated into British-administered territory and carried off a good many refugees by force. The British government every time raised a protest, although it is hardly likely that such actions could have taken place without the knowledge and tacit consent of the colonial police.

The most striking of such cases was the kidnapping of KHUMANI GANYILE and two of his associates. (GANYILE had formerly been leader of the passive resistance movement in Pondoland.) The three South African political refugees were captured in Basuto territory on August 26, 1961, carried off and imprisoned in the Republic of South Africa. For months on end the South African government denied any knowledge of the affair. However, GANYILE managed to have a letter smuggled out of the jail. The case grew into a world scandal, so that the South African government was compelled to let the three men go back to Basutoland and to apologize to the British government for the violation of Protectorate territory.

The collusion between the British colonial authorities and the South African police in the manhunt has been revealed on many occasions.

Towards the end of October 1961 the British expelled from the Protectorate the South African political refugee MOKITIMI, a member of the Basutoland Congress Party, and deported him to South Africa. The population of Maseru on October 31 demonstrated in the streets against the police terror, and it came to violent clashes with the police hurrying to the place. Two African policemen and three Europeans were injured. Next day the police arrested sixteen Africans on the charge of attempting to burn down the Catholic church.

In June 1963 the Basutoland police, in co-operation with the South African police, started a manhunt after one of the founders and leaders of the Pan-Africanist Congress, POTLAKE LEBALLO,<sup>2</sup> who had fled from the Republic of South Africa to Basutoland, where he is said to have recruited men for an armed uprising to be started in South Africa. The police arrested numerous members of the Basutoland section (called the "Poquo Movement") of the Pan-Africanist Congress and locked up the Maseru headquarters of the organization. Since, however, they had found arms or ammunition neither in the possession of those arrested nor in the party premises, they could not bring against them any charge other than that of refusing to obey the police — which was only liable to a fine.

<sup>1</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>2</sup> LEBALLO, who was of Basuto origin, and who stayed in the Republic of South Africa with a British passport, had spent there two years in prison for revolutionary activity. Afterwards he fled home to Basutoland, where he organized the Basutoland section of the Pan-Africanist Congress. The branches established in major towns and locations of the Protectorate had, according to LEBALLO, 150,000 members.

#### *Elections in April–May 1965. The Leabua Government*

The elections which had been promised at the London conference in April–May 1964 were held a year later, between April 29 and May 4, 1965. To uphold public order, the British colonial authorities dispatched a battalion from Swaziland for the duration of the elections. Although the right-wing National Party, which enjoyed the support of the British authorities and sympathized with the South African government, succeeded in gaining a slight majority (31 out of 60 seats),<sup>1</sup> the anti-imperialist left-wing B.C.P. obtained barely a few less (25), and 4 seats went to the royalist Freedom Party. Though the National Party gained a victory in the elections, the party leader, Chief LEABUA JONATHAN, was defeated, and thus the formation of a government was delayed. Later, early in June, LEABUA managed to win a seat at a by-election and to take office as head of the government.

For this success, which came as a surprise to all, even to members of LEABUA's party, this party had to thank the trick that during the election campaign LEABUA, by favour and at the expense of the South African government which supported him, went from village to village by a helicopter flown by a South African pilot, thus hoodwinking the superstitious Basuto voters who had never seen such things. As Prime Minister, LEABUA grumbled about the restricted powers of self-rule accorded by the British government, and he inveighed against the British officials of the colonial administration who did not respect his authority. In his policy programme for the period after independence he stressed the necessity of "close co-operation" with the racist government of South Africa.

Practically, however, LEABUA pursued a double-faced policy. On the one hand, he strove to shape good neighbourly relations with the government of the Republic of South Africa while, on the other hand, he still did everything possible not to lose the confidence and support of the British government. This duplicity was vividly illustrated, for example, by the position he took on the issue of the political refugees: upon coming to power he announced that he would in the future, too, grant asylum to political refugees, but this only in case the right of asylum was not used for the purpose of subversive activity against the Republic of South Africa. Characteristic of this rapprochement between LEABUA and the Pretoria regime was that the first thing he did upon taking office as Prime Minister was to declare that his government would regard as its main task to provide for job opportunities (that is, to ensure increasing supplies of Basuto labour to the capitalist employers in the Republic of South Africa).

Pursuant to the agreement of May 1964 Basutoland should have acceded to independence under the name of Lesotho within a year from the elections, that is by May 1, 1966, at the latest. Immediately after the elections LEABUA announced that he would request the British government to give its consent to the independence of Basutoland in accordance with the agreement reached at the constitutional conference of 1964.

In September 1965, after negotiating with the British Colonial Secretary, LEABUA disclosed that the British government had promised to give him assistance in solving the problems common with South Africa, and that they had useful talks about the transfer of authority over foreign affairs and internal security, as well as

<sup>1</sup> This also was due to a sort of gerrymandering, for in fact the National Party polled only 41 per cent of the votes while 57 per cent were cast for the two opposition parties, which had thus actually won the majority.



about the Africanization of the civil service and investing the Civil Service Commission with executive powers.

In November and December 1965 LEABUA and the British government again had conversations, in the course of which LEABUA confirmed that in one year following the 1965 elections (that is after April 29, 1966) he would immediately ask for the granting of independence and that "the stipulated conditions were likely to be fulfilled" by that time. The representative of the British government took note of this.

In early February 1966, prior to the independence session of the National Council, the opposition parties raised protest againsts Basuto independence under the LEABUA government because, they said, LEABUA's Basuto National Party did not represent the majority of the population. The British colonial authorities and the LEABUA government in league with them made this a pretext for intimidating the malcontents by a show of strength. Security troops were exercising in the streets of Maseru all day long, the mounted police partolled the town day and night, and on February 15 also troops were sent from Swaziland to Basutoland. On February 21, at the opening ceremony of the National Council session, police were on guard in the assembly hall and searched everyone who entered. Two days later MOKHEHLE tabled a motion censuring the police intervention as a grave insult to the dignity of the National Council and its members. Afterwards the Basutoland Congress Party representative at Cairo protested againsts British troops being dispatched to Basutoland and the mass arrests made upon their arrival. He demanded the immediate withdrawal of troops and the release of the arrested persons. He criticized Great Britain, the United States, South Africa and West Germany for their subversive activity in Basutoland and requested that the people of Basutoland be allowed to handle their affairs freely.

In reply to a question in the British Parliament on March 7, 1966, Mrs. EIRENE WHITE said on behalf of the government that if both chambers of the Basuto legislature demanded in a joint resolution the granting of independence, a constitutional conference would be held to set a date for independence, probably, by about the end of the year.

A few days later, on March 12, the British government issued a White Paper containing the draft constitution of Basutoland after independence. The draft provided among other things that the President of the independent state should be the paramount chief of the Basutos, and specified the issues which should be settled by the Basutoland government in agreement with the British (rights and obligations under pre-existing treaties, etc.).

On April 18, 1966, LEABUA submitted a motion to the National Council: the British government should be requested to grant independence to Basutoland in virtue of the agreement arrived at during the constitutional conference and as provided in the White Paper. When the motion was adopted, the entire opposition walked out. The next day MOKHEHLE, the leader of the opposition, moved an amendment to the effect that adoption of the draft constitution should require a two-thirds majority. The motion was rejected after a debate lasting for more than three weeks, and on May 11 the National Council passed LEABUA's proposal by 32 votes to 28.

The Senate opened the debate over the Prime Minister's proposal on April 19. During the debate the opposition submitted an amendment: control over the military, the police and security organs should be exercised by the paramount chief, who should be invested also with the right of veto on parliamentary decisions concerning amendments to the constitution and affairs of national interest. After the majority had rejected the proposed amendment, the paramount chief on April 29 deposed five senators who backed the government and voted against the motion of

the opposition, and replaced them with five supporters of the Marema Tlou Party. Under the constitution the paramount chief had the privilege of appointing 11 of the 33 members of the Senate, but the Basutoland High Court decided on May 2 that the five dismissed senators should remain until May 12, when the High Court would make its final decision, and forbade Senate President MAKOTOKO (President of the Marema Tlou) to carry out the paramount chief's instruction. On May 2 the Senate building was surrounded by police armed with tear-gas grenades, whereupon MAKOTOKO adjourned the meeting and left the chair. On May 5 the Senate assembled under an interim president and accepted LEABUA's proposal concerning independence by 22 votes to 8, with one abstention. On May 12 the High Court invalidated the dismissal of the five senators and confirmed the Senate's decision. It gave as a reason that, though the paramount chief had the right to appoint senators, he had no constitutional power to relieve them. On May 16 the Senate met again and decided, by 23 votes to 9, to remove Senate President MAKOTOKO and the Vice-President and to replace them with N. I. QHOBELA and S. S. MATETE, respectively.

From May 19 onward the new National Council was preoccupied with the matter of good neighbourly relations and co-operation with South Africa (see below). On July 28 the debate was suspended and the session adjourned because the Basutoland High Court divested of their seats two National Party members (whose corrupt election practices had been denounced by a Congress Party petition), as a result of which the Basuto National Party lost its majority in the legislature. On August 19 MOKHEHLE called upon the paramount chief to dissolve the National Council and appoint a caretaker government to carry on the affairs until the new elections. But the National Party recaptured the two seats at by-elections, and since in the meantime also the Marema Tlou member had gone over to the National Party, this latter already wielded a majority of four in the National Council.

#### *Developments in the Relations between Basutoland and the Republic of South Africa*

The cause of the irreconcilable antagonism between the LEABUA government and the opposition lay in their sharp differences of principle regarding the question of the relationships of Basutoland with the racist regime of South Africa. LEABUA's policy of compromise, which betrayed the interests of the people and which he tried to disguise by phrasemongering, was opposed, on the part of the paramount chief and the opposition parties, by the principled anticolonialist and anti-imperialist stand of the Organization of African Unity.

This conflict made it basically impossible for the different political factions to agree upon accession to independence and the constitution at the forthcoming constitutional conference.

It may not be without interest to survey briefly the developments of the relations between Basutoland and South Africa during the year preceding the constitutional conference.

Immediately following the elections, on May 4, 1965, LEABUA announced that his government, while condemning the apartheid system and categorically opposing the incorporation of Basutoland by the Republic of South Africa, wished to establish diplomatic relations with the Republic and negotiate with its government for material assistance to Basutoland.

The next day a South African government spokesman stated that his government was pleased to see the victory of LEABUA's party, in which he saw a possibility to



settle the relations between the two countries, and that considering the weak majority of LEABUA's party, South Africa deemed it necessary to augment LEABUA's authority by lending material assistance to his government.

The National Council in its meeting of May 19, 1965, dealt with the government's policy aimed at the establishment of co-operation and communication with South Africa. The Basutoland Congress Party bitterly attacked this policy, whereupon the Prime Minister replied that Basutoland had at all times co-operated with South Africa and had no other neighbour to establish useful co-operation with. The next day MOKHEHLE, the leader of the Basutoland Congress Party, presented a motion of no confidence, but the National Council rejected it and voted confidence to the government.

On May 26 the Prime Minister announced that the government would enter into negotiations with South Africa and the British government on the utilization of the waters of mountain rivers in Basutoland. (The fact was that South Africa had designed far-reaching plans to this effect.)

On June 9 VERWOERD made known that, at LEABUA's urgent request, the South African government was dispatching 100,000 sacks of bread grain (200 lb. each), worth \$ 160,000, to alleviate the famine in Basutoland. (LEABUA did not ask the British government for help.)

In the three months and a half following VERWOERD's announcement the question of South African aid was a subject of heated debates in Basutoland. The Congress Party accused the government of wishing to use the issue for influencing the coming by-elections to LEABUA's advantage, and claimed that the Pretoria government intended the aid as a bait for preparing the annexation of the territory.

LEABUA said on June 27, 1965: "Lesotho is intimately related to South Africa geographically, historically and economically. At the same time, we are very well aware that we are part of the new Africa . . . We will not interfere with South Africa and we do not expect South Africa to interfere with us, but no less important is our determination to ensure that Basutoland is not used as a pawn in the hands of those who have interests to secure other than the immediate interests of Basutoland."

When speaking in the National Council on July 23, LEABUA qualified the South African aid as a "noble gesture" and said that, as President of the Basuto National Party, he would place the grain received in aid at the disposal of the government for distribution among the needy, regardless of political affiliations. The opposition proposed that the National Council cease to deal with the issue and the government should not undertake to distribute the aid.

The debate was interrupted because of the adjournment of the National Council on July 28.

On August 18 a government spokesman made known that the bread grain would be distributed soon.

On August 27 LEABUA announced his intention to make a formal appeal to VERWOERD to start negotiations on the utilization of the rivers and the improvement of the conditions of the Basutos employed in South Africa. He stated at the same time that his government wished to establish good relations with other countries, including South Africa, which is closely linked to Basutoland in the economic field.

Ten Basutoland Congress Party members got held up in London in August because the government of South Africa refused them transit visas under the pretext that they had gone to England to train saboteurs and guerrillas. Toward the end of August LEABUA talked this over with the British Colonial Secretary, who expressed the opinion that every Basuto had the freedom to leave the country and return there.

LEABUA replied that he did not recognize the right of South Africa to prevent Basutos from going back to their country or make their return subject to conditions.

In September 1965 the British Colonial Secretary authorized the Basutoland government to discuss with South Africa the matters of common interest on the understanding that it had to agree beforehand with the British government as to the agenda and the time of such conversations.

Still in September the South African government put a ban on some printed papers being delivered to Basutoland. So all copies of two London magazines intended to Basutoland were seized. At a frontier station the South African police held up the car of a Marema Tlou leader and impounded 2,000 copies of a Basuto publication found in the car.

The talks held with delegates of the Basutoland government at the Colonial Office in London toward the end of November resulted in an agreement to the effect that the Basutoland government could enter into negotiations with South Africa to settle matters concerning extradition, visas, labour, business connections, the construction of hydroelectric stations, and diplomatic relations after independence, on condition that the British government would be kept informed all the time.

Early in November the Basutoland Congress Party in the National Council raised the question of reannexation of the lands which South Africa had in the past taken from Basutoland. But this issue was not to be found among the subjects agreed upon in London. The government's representative told the National Council that this question should be put off until the government had full powers and complete freedom to talk directly with South Africa. (Namely the Congress Party demanded that the negotiation of this problem with South Africa be carried on through the British government.)

On February 11, 1966, LEABUA categorically denied the accusation of the opposition that he was bent on making the country a Bantustan type of dependency of South Africa, and added that his government wanted an independent Lesotho and peaceful coexistence with the Republic of South Africa.

Speaking about apartheid and relationships with South Africa at the annual conference of his party on March 13, LEABUA affirmed that his government's attitude and policies were determined by Basutoland's geographical position as well as its economic and political situation in Southern Africa. Reiterating his disapproval of the policy of apartheid, he made known that he wished to meet VERWOERD in South Africa to thank him for the grain sent in aid for the job opportunities given to Basutos in South Africa, and to discuss with him the peaceful coexistence of their countries as two independent sovereign states. Finally he stressed that his government would not tolerate the training of Basutos for subversion in any country.

In March 1966 the South African authorities at a frontier station arrested the General Secretary of the Basutoland Congress Party, KOLOSANG, who was on his way home through South Africa, and deported him to Nairobi, because he was unwilling to give information about the anti-South African political schemes being prepared in the African countries he had recently visited.

On April 18, when submitting the bill of independence, LEABUA told the National Council that agreements between Lesotho and South Africa should in the future be concluded without intervention from the United Kingdom or any other foreign state. He pointed out that in the past Great Britain and South Africa had concluded a number of agreements binding upon Basutoland without taking into consideration the real wishes and interests of the Basutos. To the argument of the opposition that independence would increase the danger of incorporation by South Africa, he replied



that, quite the contrary, this danger was greater as long as Basutoland was in colonial status.

At LEABUA's request the British government called a new conference to London to discuss the conditions of independence. The opposition parties (among them the Freedom Party of Paramount Chief MOSHOESHOE) did not recognize as lawful the powers given to Prime Minister LEABUA, and demanded postponement of the proposed conference and the organization of new elections.

The conference nevertheless took place in London between June 8 and 17. On behalf of the opposition MOKHEHLE, as representative of the B.C.P., right at the beginning of the conference raised an objection, repeating the demand of the opposition for postponement of the conference and the holding of new elections. Since his protest went unheeded, the opposition representatives in their speeches charged LEABUA with the intent of delivering the country to the Republic of South Africa in exchange for financial assistance.

At the time of the conference Paramount Chief MOSHOESHOE himself made his appearance in London and sent a memorandum to the British government, warning the Secretary of State for the Colonies that, should the British government conclude with LEABUA the agreement on independence without providing guarantees against the Republic of South Africa, grave internal struggles and acts of violence would ensue.

The view of the opposition parties and the concern expressed by the Paramount Chief were shared by left-wing elements of the Labour Party and also by the Liberal Party. (The leader of the latter party, GRIMOND, even led a deputation to the Colonial Secretary, expressing to him the party's concern over the future of Basutoland.)

LEABUA insisted that the conditions had come about which had been stipulated for Basutoland's independence by the 1964 constitutional conference, the status of the paramount chief had also been settled, and so the only thing to be done was for the British government to consent that Basutoland should win independence on October 4, 1966, at the latest. The British Colonial Secretary expressed his agreement with the view of LEABUA.

The opposition parties objected. They pointed out that at the 1964 constitutional conference the then Colonial Secretary, SANDYS, had refused to discuss the powers reserved for the British government and had promised that the question would be settled by the last conference before independence. The opposition proposed that those reserved powers should not be conferred upon the Basutoland government, but that the paramount chief's privilege should be to handle specific questions like the future relations with South Africa. It proposed also that in the new elections to be held before independence the entire people should decide upon a definitive constitution.

Since the Colonial Secretary rejected their proposals, the two opposition parties issued a joint written declaration which said among other things:

"Our two parties which together represent the vast majority of Basotho are prepared to enter fresh elections in coalition to ensure the election of a Government having the confidence of the majority.

"By granting independence to an unpopular minority Government and on terms bitterly opposed by the vast majority of the people, the British Government will in fact be creating a ready-made trouble spot in the very heart of South Africa, a country which for many years has been waiting for that very opportunity.

"We can quite understand that Chief Leabua Jonathan cannot face any new election as his party will suffer inevitable defeat. But the attitude of the British

officials is strange, to say the least. It seems the British Government with unwonted speed is determined to hand over the country to a minority Government."

Having made this declaration of protest, the opposition members left the conference, and the following day they issued another joint statement which read as follows:

"We were not prepared for a conference whose conclusions were agreed in advance between the minority party governing Basutoland and the Colonial officials backed by the Colonial Secretary.

"The role we have been allocated in this conference is that of puppets in a carefully rehearsed pantomime. We are therefore forced to protest in the only way open to us, by dissociating ourselves completely from this travesty.

"Today, in the name of the majority of the Sotho people, we announce that we are unwilling to accept as binding on us any constitution for the independence of Basutoland which is signed between the British Government and Chief Leabua Jonathan's minority Government.

"There can be no certainty that the Basotho will quietly submit to Government under a constitution which not only weakens our traditional institutions but entrenches power at the centre in the hands of a minority Government.

"Britain still has a chance — her last chance — of avoiding the internationalization of this issue, by insisting on the constitutional conference being adjourned, to enable it to be resumed in conditions that allow for the essential unifying process needed to produce a strong, independent nation to emerge and to survive in the cockpit of southern Africa."

At the last meeting of the conference on June 17 the Basutoland government and the British government arrived at an agreement on the definitive constitution of Basutoland, delegates of the opposition parties were absent from that meeting; Paramount Chief MOSHOESHOE attended but did not sign the protocol on the agreement.

At the closing session of the conference LEABUA hypocritically affirmed that his government would build its policy upon the principles of Pan-Africanism and of the Organization of African Unity, and would grant asylum to South African refugees, but it would not tolerate the building of a base in the country against South Africa, with which it wished to enter into an agreement on mutual respect for their sovereign rights.

According to the "constitution of independence" thus achieved Basutoland was to become an independent state by the name of Lesotho on October 4, 1966, and be admitted as a member of the British Commonwealth. The state was to be headed by the Basuto paramount chief as constitutional ruler, but public affairs, such as defence and internal security, and the matters relating to the civil service, which had been controlled thus far by the British government, were referred to the authority of the government of Lesotho. According to the communiqué on the constitutional conference, "the form of the constitution agrees with the agreement reached in 1964, signed by all parties and leaders, and the expressed desire of the Basutoland Parliament". In the communiqué the British government expressed the opinion that "there is little widespread dissent in Basutoland to the relatively minor changes now made in the constitution for purposes of independence", and that "if law and order, which is now well maintained, is disturbed, those who simply seek personal power will be responsible".<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> These allegations of the British government must not go unchallenged. So many assertions, so many untruths.



The constitution contained resounding phrases about human rights, personal freedom, etc., but not a single word about an extradition treaty to be concluded with South Africa as proposed by the opposition.

The negotiations which took place at London in June and the agreement arrived at were pertinently evaluated by the Movement for Colonial Freedom, sponsored by left-wing British politicians under the presidency of FENNER BROCKWAY, in a statement published in July 1966:

"The Movement for Colonial Freedom is very disturbed by the decision of the London Constitutional Conference to inaugurate independence on October 4, without reaching an agreement with the Opposition Parties which represent a majority of the electorate.

"This is the first occasion that independence has been granted to an unrepresentative and minority government. There is clearly a danger not only of a formidable resistance, but of steps towards appeasement with the Government of South Africa.

"Dr. Verwoerd has stated that he hopes that the Protectorates may become Bantustan States, and South African association with the minority Government has already been close. In these circumstances, Basutoland would undoubtedly be closed to political refugees from South Africa.

"The Movement for Colonial Freedom calls for elections before independence, and a provision in the Constitution under which a Referendum should be held before any action is taken to bring Basutoland into association with South Africa."<sup>1</sup>

#### *UN Manipulations about Basutoland in July 1966<sup>2</sup>*

The Special Committee dealt with the question of Basutoland in its meetings of July 6 and 8, 1966. First it heard two petitioners, two opposition leaders of the country, President S. MAKOTOKO of the Marema Tlou party and General Secretary KOLISANG of the Basutoland Congress Party. The two politicians described frankly the situation, the corrupt practices in the holding of the 1964 constitutional conference and the April 1965 elections, emphasizing that LEABUA's party and govern-

1. It is not true to say that the 1966 constitution agrees with the 1964 agreement, because it differs from it in that it reduces the Basuto paramount chief to a subordinate role under the LEABUA government subservient to the imperialists.

2. It is not true to say that the 1964 agreement expressed the desire of the Basutoland Parliament, it expressed rather the desire of only a phoney parliamentary majority of the LEABUA party (relying on 41 per cent of the electorate), or practically of a minority of the Basutos.

3. It is not true to say that only minor changes were made in the constitution and that they caused only little dissent. The degrading of the paramount chief was indeed an essential change which, as can be seen, elicited very sharp dissent from the opposition parties representing the majority of the Basutos.

Finally the provocative remark referring to "disturbance of law and order" is a malicious slander on the opposition (in fact, no major disturbance occurred or was to be expected), and the reference to those who "seek personal power" is an outrageous libel and threat addressed to the paramount chief, who protested against the manipulations of the British government and the lackeys like LEABUA not do defend his personal power but to safeguard the interests of the Basuto people.

<sup>1</sup> *Asia and Africa Review*, July 1966, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> As to the June meetings of the UN Special Committee, where the stand of the opposition parties was explained by MOKHEHLE and MAKOTOKO, see p. 252.

ment were not representative of the wishes of the population but served the policies of the British imperialists and colluded with the racist government of South Africa against the interests of the Basuto people. They demanded that new, free and democratic elections be held before independence, and that the provisions of the constitution detrimental to the people's interests and curtailing the powers of the paramount chief be changed.

In the debate over the petitions the British representative made a lengthy and hypocritical statement in an effort to belie the petitioners. Representatives of Tanzania, Mali and the Soviet Union pointed out that the dithyrambic speech of the British delegate had very little in common with the truth, but the representatives of the United States, Australia and other imperialist countries as usual took the British allegations at their face value. It became clear that the Committee would be unable to pass a unanimous resolution on the evaluation of the situation in Basutoland.

The fact was that the British imperialists were very much interested in having the debate on Basutoland closed to avoid any further complications (new elections, amendments to the constitution) before the country would accede to independence under the government of their lackey, LEABUA, at the earliest possible date. This, however, required that the report to the General Assembly should reflect the concurrent opinion of all members of the Special Committee, thus to prevent the Assembly from adopting a resolution containing provisions contrary to the intentions of the British government. Therefore the Committee chairman resorted to a misleading manoeuvre "upon the initiative of several delegations". He drew up a text purportedly outlining the issues on which there was agreement among the members, submitted it to the Committee, suggesting that if there was no objection to stating that agreement, they should accordingly report to the General Assembly, thus making it needless to pass a separate resolution. The chairman's draft noted that (1) all members expressed the desire for Basutoland's immediate accession to independence, (2) that many members hoped all parties in the territory would co-operate for the common objectives, (3) that it was generally agreed that the independence of Basutoland should be based on the principle laid down in paragraph 2 of the Special Committee resolution<sup>1</sup> of June 9, 1966, and (4) that several delegations expressed the hope that the territorial integrity of Basutoland would be guaranteed.

This solution satisfied the British delegation, since it only laid down principles without urging further concrete steps, and was at the same time acceptable also to those who understood the stating of principles to be synonymous with their implementation.

In the ensuing debate the British representative praised the chairman of the Special Committee for his initiative and did not object to the adoption of the text but emphasized his reservations just to the most substantial passages in it (the third and fourth sentences). Statements by his imperialist allies, the delegates from the United States and Australia, were made in a similar vein.

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That the fears of the opposition parties and of Paramount Chief MOSHOESHOE were not unfounded could be surmised from certain events still prior to independ-

<sup>1</sup> In the said paragraph the Special Committee requested the British government to ensure that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV), the independence of Basutoland, Bechuanaland and Swaziland were based on the freely expressed will of the entire people.



ence. In the early days of September Prime Minister LEABUA went to visit the Republic of South Africa and conducted talks with Dr. VERWOERD. This was the first time the head of government of South Africa ever met a "Native" Prime Minister.<sup>1</sup> Although both governments made the point that it was only a visit of courtesy, and that no important political business was done, this statement was undoubtedly insincere. The joint communiqué issued on the meeting stressed that the talks had been conducted in a "spirit of goodwill", and that it was wholly clear that the two states had no intention to interfere in one another's internal affairs. The communiqué mentioned a single point of agreement: the South African government promised to allow free passage to the foreign guests arriving for the forthcoming independence celebration and to provide the necessary means of transportation to the Basuto workers employed in South Africa who wished to go home for the occasion.

The question of what in fact was discussed and agreed upon between Prime Minister LEABUA and the head of the racist government of South Africa a month before independence remains to be seen from the future developments concerning the "independent" state of Lesotho.

A few days after LEABUA's visit to the Republic of South Africa, on September 12, a crowd of 25,000 demonstrated in the streets of Maseru against "accession to independence" designed to ensure the maintenance in office of the LEABUA government. The procession of protest was organized by the Congress Party and the Marema Tlou. The police dispersed the demonstrators with tear-gas bombs. The incident demanded no casualty.

On October 4 Basutoland was proclaimed the independent state of Lesotho. The largest opposition party of the country, the Basutoland Congress Party, called upon the masses to boycott the celebration, and a great part of the population, following this appeal, kept away. True, Paramount Chief MOSHOESHOE undertook to attend the celebration of independence, but he stressed his invariable disagreement with the constitution. Although at the celebration held in the Maseru stadium he accepted the official documents of independence from the hands of Princess MARINA who represented the British Crown, yet afterwards in a speech he declared that the constitution was unsuitable for putting an end to the tensions prevailing in the new state and for solving the problems of the country. In conclusion he promised to do his best to solve those problems.

A characteristic occurrence: the first to recognize the new independent state — right on the day of independence — was the Federal Republic of Germany. President LÜBKE sent a cable of congratulation to MOSHOESHOE as King of Lesotho, and Chancellor ERHARD conveyed his good wishes to Prime Minister LEABUA, letting him know that West Germany was ready to establish diplomatic relations with Lesotho.

<sup>1</sup> Characteristically, not once during the whole time of this visit did VERWOERD appear, in public or before newspapermen, in company of the African statesman. He saw him only in the offices of the Water-Kloof air base, where he discussed with him for three hours and a half. After the conversations LEABUA and his retinue had lunch at an exclusive Pretoria hotel, where they entered through the main entrance (otherwise forbidden for Africans), but the host did not join them.

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## SWAZILAND

With regard to its area and population Swaziland was the smallest British colony in Africa, but, unlike the other two British Protectorates in southern Africa, it was of more than only strategic importance. The territory is rich in mineral resources (asbestos, iron, tin, etc.), and its land is very good for cotton growing and animal husbandry.

About Swaziland the British colonialists and their liberal advocates told the legend that it was an idyllic country, where oppression and racism were unknown, where Africans lived a happy life, under good chiefs and sympathetic colonial officials, in peaceful harmony with European landowners. The Labourite JOHN HATCH wrote this: "Swaziland has more hopeful economic prospects than the other two territories and this may in part explain the happier atmosphere in race relations. Certainly considerable confidence has been established between the administration and the leaders of Swazi opinion."<sup>1</sup>

The comparatively good conditions prevailing among the races in Swaziland were due to the excellent body of administrators and the person of Chief SOBUZA II.<sup>2</sup> The administrators were able to win the Swazi leaders' confidence and to bring the European residents to profess: "We are all Swazis here."<sup>3</sup>

On the other hand, the truth is that the Swazi people suffered from a threefold scourge: they were politically oppressed by the British colonialists and economically exploited by the English and Boer landowners, who around the turn of the century had seized most of their land, and by the concessions which were pocketing millions by the extraction of the mineral resources. This double yoke was coupled with a third one, traditional tribalism, which, on the one side, helped to uphold the rule of foreign oppressors and exploiters, and, on the other, kept the people in political subjection and backwardness.

The British colonialists, who regarded the territory as a strategic base against the expansionism of the neighbouring Union of South Africa, co-operated with the South African Boer settlers, making it possible for them to buy in the country large estates

<sup>1</sup> JOHN HATCH, *Everyman's Africa*, London, 1959, p. 133

<sup>2</sup> SOBUZA II, paramount chief (king) of the Swazis, was born in 1889 of the Dlamini ruling family. He went to school at Zombodze in Swaziland and later at Lovedale in Cape Colony. He was 32 years old when in 1921 he took over the paramountcy from his grandmother, the Queen Mother LAMOTSIBENI, who had until then been his guardian. He is Protestant by religion. According to HATCH: "He boasts the title of the 'Methodist with a hundred wives,' combining the advantages of both European religion and tribal tradition." *Op. cit.*, p. 188.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 135.



and concessions for next to nothing, by bribing and cajoling the Swazi chiefs, and to exploit the Swazi peasants and agricultural labourers or mine workers. The policy of the British colonialists served the interests both of the English settlers and mine-owners and of the Boer capitalists and landowners. To secure their colonial domination and promote the interests of the settlers and concessionnaires, they needed the services of the Swazi tribal headmen, of the paramount chief in the first place, to whom they did favours while doing nothing, during their rule of over half a century, to improve the situation of the Swazi agricultural population, to liquidate its economic and cultural backwardness. After the war the colonial administration charted an eight-year plan of agricultural development,<sup>1</sup> and issued laws and regulations one after another to protect the landowners' interests: on soil improvement against erosion; water supply and irrigation; afforestation and protection against grass fires, etc.,<sup>2</sup> and published annual reports on the progress of farming and livestock breeding.<sup>3</sup> At the same time it made more and more political concessions to European settlers. The European Advisory Council established back in 1921, which until then had only ex-officio members, was reformed in 1949: the country was divided into ten constituencies, each of which sent one elected member to the Council (only Europeans were qualified both to vote and to stand for election), and although the Council was composed of eight members in all, only the elected non-official members had the right to vote. After the war even the powers of the traditional tribal rulers and authorities were regulated by law. In 1950 three such laws were issued at once.<sup>4</sup> The "excellent body of administrators", however, failed to deal just with the problems of economic and cultural development and the political rights of the Swazi and the Zulu people who made up 97 per cent of the population.

Traditional tribal leadership with the Swazis is also twofold: supreme tribal power is vested in the paramount chief (king) of the Swazis, but before deciding any political question or any other matter of national importance, he is obliged to consult the other holder of supreme power — the Queen Mother.<sup>5</sup>

The residence of the paramount chief is at Lozithlezi, 11 miles away from Mbabane, the seat of the British colonial administration, while the Queen Mother resides at a third locality, Lomamba, 27 miles farther away from Lozithlezi. Lomamba is regarded as the traditional royal seat, where the tribal rites and ceremonies are held.

In the past the king was assisted by two advisory bodies: a restricted committee called the Liqiqi, composed of tribal leaders (most of whom were relatives of the king), and a broader council called the Libandhla, which all the chiefs and their advisers could attend. In the first few years following the war the present paramount chief, SOBHUZA II, still ruled his people as a despot with dictatorial powers (so did the Queen Mother in her own sphere of authority), and did not ask for the help of the advisory bodies but consulted only some trusted members. The 1950 regulation on "Native Administration" recognized only the Libandhla as a body of the paramount chief's councillors, but this met only once a year and was sitting only for a

<sup>1</sup> V. LIVERSAGE, *Swaziland Development 1948*.

<sup>2</sup> Private Forest Proclamation No. 3/1951, Grass Fires Proclamation No. 74/1951, Natural Resources Ordinance No. 71/1951, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Swaziland Annual Reports of the Livestock and Agricultural Development, Swaziland Annual Reports of the Veterinary Department, etc.

<sup>4</sup> Native Administration (Consolidation) Proclamation No. 79/1950; Native Courts Proclamation No. 80/1950; National Treasury Proclamation No. 81/1950.

<sup>5</sup> In case the king's mother dies, the functions of Queen Mother are exercised, up to our days, by one of the king's aunts.

week. As far back as 1950 the Libandhla had appointed a permanent committee composed of six members (one chief from the six provinces each), but SOBHUZA's absolute rule was in no measure limited by this body either.

The Swazi people suffering from threefold oppression (colonial regime, feudal chiefs, white landowners and capitalists) were utterly underdeveloped by any political, economic and cultural standard. Political rights were accorded only to the European settlers. Economic development was impossible owing to the great land-hunger<sup>1</sup> and the low technical level of the mode and means of agricultural production. The majority of the Swazi farmers confined within reserves continued vegetating by tilling their tiny holdings, and those who could not manage took up jobs in the settlers' plantations or in mines for starvation wages or hired themselves out as seasonal labourers in the Union of South Africa.

Characteristic of the cultural standard of the population is that still in the late 1950's 87 per cent of the Swazis were illiterate, only 25 per cent of the children went to school (most of them girls), and there was all in all one secondary school in the country.

No wonder in such circumstances that the helpless farmers of Swaziland still had no political organization whatever or independence movement in the early post-war years. The few educated members of the tribe had founded in 1939 the Swaziland Progressive Association, under the auspices of Paramount Chief SOBHUZA and the British Resident Commissioner, but it pursued exclusively cultural objectives. The Association aimed to unite only the few intellectual elements of the Swazis, neglecting at the same time the broad masses of the agricultural population.

#### *Swazi Political Movements*

The first political party in Swaziland grew up out of the Swaziland Progressive Association looking back upon an existence of three decades. JOHN JUNE NQUKU,<sup>2</sup> who had been president of the Association since 1945, changed the organization to a political party early in 1960. The party immediately proclaimed its programme: it demanded universal suffrage on a democratic basis, an end to all forms of racial discrimination, and the introduction of self-rule, and it took a firm stand against South African aspirations for the annexation of Swaziland.

In January 1960 the European Advisory Council forwarded to the British Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations a memorandum proposing the establishment of a legislature in which the Swazis would also be represented besides the European

<sup>1</sup> In 1950 more than fifty per cent of the arable land (1,881,471 acres) was owned by concession companies or the European settlers who made up at most 1.5 to 2 per cent of the population, while the Swazis representing 98 per cent possessed the remaining 1,799,471 acres. More than half the land-owning European settlers were Transvaalers from South Africa, many of whom were absentees.

<sup>2</sup> JOHN JUNE NQUKU was born of Zulu parents at Pietermaritzburg (South Africa) in 1899. He worked as school principal at Edendale, in the vicinity of Maritzburg, from 1920 to 1925, and at Impolweni in 1928-29. In January 1930 he was appointed inspector of all Swazi schools. In 1934 he launched the paper *Izwi Lama Swazi* (The Voice of the Swazi), which later merged into the *Bantu Press*. In 1940 he resigned as school inspector and engaged in political activities as a member of the Swazi National Council. In 1945 he was elected president of the Swaziland Progressive Association. In 1955 he founded another paper, the *Swazlander*, an English-language organ, of which he became first editor. In 1957 he travelled widely in England, Western Europe and America.



settlers. Paramount Chief SOBHUZA proposed in April 1960 that the new legislature be an amalgamation of the Swazi National Council and the European Advisory Council. In response to these moves the British government instructed the Resident Commissioner to start tentative talks regarding the formation of a Legislative and an Executive Council. The Resident Commissioner had the first such talks in October 1961 with members of the Constitutional Committee of the European Advisory Council and other white representatives, then separately with the Swazi National Council, and in November he held a joint discussion with all political groups. Subsequently, to have the constitution drawn up, the paramount chief formed the Swaziland Constitutional Committee with the participation of all political organizations. In March 1962 the Committee submitted its report in which it made the following suggestions:

- to replace the Resident Commissioner with a British Governor directly responsible to the Colonial Secretary;

- to set up a 29-member Legislative Council composed of a president, 12 members to be elected by the Swazi National Council, 12 European settlers to be elected jointly by settlers and Africans, and 4 colonial officials as ex-officio members;

- to appoint an 8-member Executive Council with the Governor as president and a membership composed of 3 colonial officials as ex-officio members, another official to be nominated by the Governor, and 3 non-official members to be appointed by the Governor from among the non-official members of the Legislative Council;

- to guarantee the powers of the paramount chief (the councils should present their records and resolutions to the paramount for approbation; the paramount chief should be empowered to make proposals to the Executive Council and demand the revision of its decisions).

Proposals were also made concerning the land issue, questions of local government, etc.

Towards the end of 1961 an internal crisis broke out in the Swaziland Progressive Party. Secretary-General AMBROSE ZWANE<sup>1</sup> and youth leader DUMISA DHLAMINI accused NQUKU of regarding the party as his personal property and of dictatorially closing the party meetings whenever he met with opposition from the majority of the executive. The party conference in February 1962 deposed NQUKU and elected ZWANE as President and DHLAMINI as Secretary-General of the party. But this move could not solve the crisis. Towards the end of 1962 ZWANE and his followers resigned from the Swaziland Progressive Party and in early 1963 founded a new political organization called the Ngwane National Liberation Congress (N.N.L.C.).

#### *Negotiations in January–February 1963*

At the end of January 1963 the British government invited to a conference in London Paramount Chief SOBHUZA's representatives, members of the National Council and the three Swazi nationalist parties, and delegates of the European minor-

<sup>1</sup> AMBROSE ZWANE was born at Bremersdorp (Swaziland) in 1924. He was educated at a local Catholic mission school and a Natal secondary school, and studied at Fort Hare College and Johannesburg University, where he obtained his degree in medicine. First he was a health worker in a Natal hospital, then, after his return to Swaziland in 1953, worked as a government medical officer for seven years. In April 1960 he resigned and devoted all his time to politics. In July 1960 he was elected Secretary-General of the Swaziland Progressive Party.

ity of Swaziland, with a view to getting the Swazi national movement to accept the draft constitution submitted in March 1962 (and approved by the paramount chief and the European minority). The conference opened on January 28 and was closed on February 13. It proved a failure. The leaders of the national movement refused to give up their position. The representative of the Colonial Office closed the conference by announcing that a new draft would be worked out on the basis of suggestions from the British government and a new conference would be held in Swaziland to discuss the draft.

#### *The Makeshift "Constitution" of May 1963*

On May 30, 1963, the British government, defying the will of the 98 per cent majority of the Swaziland population, introduced a makeshift constitution. Accordingly the legislative power was exercised by the Legislative Council composed of 24 elected members. Its president and four members were appointed, from among the equally appointed members of the Executive Council, by the British Resident Commissioner, who had the right also to appoint as many British subjects to the Legislative Council as he deemed necessary in order to safeguard the interests of all strata of the population and the normal functioning of government. Eight of the 24 elective seats were reserved for the European minority (four being elected by voters on the European roll and four by the entire electorate). The Swazis also had eight representatives, who were elected "by traditional methods", that is to say, appointed by the paramount chief. The remaining eight members were elected by the entire electorate. This meant that, even if only Swazis were elected to the latter eight seats, the European minority making up hardly 2 to 3 per cent of the population would anyway have had in the legislature, together with the members appointed by the Resident Commissioner, a majority representation against the Swazi members. And as far as the exercise of the executive power was concerned, it was entirely in the hands of the British Resident Commissioner and members appointed by him, with no Swazi participation.

#### *The Mine Workers' Strike in May–June 1963 and the Repressive Measures of the British Government*

In May 1963 the workers of the Havelock mine (one of the biggest asbestos mines in the world), north of Mbabane, went on strike. The reason was of an economic nature: the workers demanded a rise (a minimum wage of £1 a day). On the ground that it was forbidden by law to go on strike within 21 days from the announcement of a labour-management conflict, the British colonial administration declared the strike illegal and arrested some of the strike leaders. The Mbabane workers responded with a general strike and staged demonstrations in the business district and the European quarter of the town. The administration mobilized the 370-men police of the Protectorate against the demonstrators who were then dispersed with tear gas and truncheons. Two leaders of the National Liberation Congress, DHLAMINI and MASEKO, were arrested, tried and imprisoned for directing the strike. Since the miners still did not stop striking, in mid-June the British government, upon a suggestion of the Resident Commissioner seconded by the British High Commissioner, ordered a 600-strong infantry battalion from Kenya to enter Swaziland and suppress the strike.



The battalion surrounded the mining settlement, thus cutting off its communication with the outside world, and arrested 150 African mine workers. Under the pressure of force the miners had to stop the strike after 26 days and returned to work.

#### *Referendum in January and Elections in June 1964*

After the draft constitution was made public, SOBHUZA and the European settlers tried to have it modified. To this end they sent deputations to London in July and November 1963 to talk with the British Foreign Secretary, and then on November 19 they submitted a petition to the House of Commons. The principal demands of SOBHUZA were (a) that the constitution should not affect his sovereign rights, (b) that the land and the country's mineral resources should be under his control, and (c) that every voter should be placed on only one electoral roll — Europeans should vote either on the European or on the national roll, Africans either in the traditional tribal elections or on the national roll.

On January 19, 1964, after the constitution was enacted, SOBHUZA and his settler associates held an unofficial referendum on the constitution. The voters were not asked concrete questions, they only had to tell whether they approved the paramount chief's petition to the British Parliament. The African political parties, just like some of the Europeans, boycotted the referendum, and the colonial administration stated that the British government regarded the matter as closed with the enactment of the constitution and refused to take note of the referendum. Of course, SOBHUZA's expectation was fulfilled: it was inconceivable for the Swazis faithful to their tribal traditions to vote against their paramount chief. About 123,000 persons took part in the referendum, and the number of those voting "no" was less than 200. In reply to a question in the Commons on February 11, a spokesman for the British government stated that, to judge from the evidence of the referendum, the Swazi people had full confidence in SOBHUZA and were loyal to him, but the constitution remained in force, and the Swazi National Council reconciled itself to the fact.

Elections to the Legislative Council to be held under the new constitution were scheduled for June 1964. Prior to the elections two new political parties were formed. The Imbokodvo Party, which was founded by SOBHUZA himself for the very occasion of elections, enjoyed the support of chiefs in general and of the settlers' United Swaziland Party. The other was the Swaziland Independence Party formed by a dissenting group that had left the United Swaziland Party and adopted a mixed programme. This party, while standing up against the policy of apartheid and the plans for the incorporation of Swaziland by the Republic of South Africa, considered it premature to demand, and was against, Swaziland's accession to independence and the introduction of universal franchise as well.

As was to be expected the June elections resulted in total victory for SOBHUZA and his settler associates.

Immediately after the elections CARL TODD, the leader of the United Swaziland Party of the settlers in league with SOBHUZA, said that the first thing the new Legislative Council would do was to bring pressure to bear upon the British Government in order to obtain the introduction of a new constitution suited to Swazi traditions.

In June 1965 SOBHUZA sent a delegation to visit the heads of state of major African countries. The aim of this mission was to establish close ties of friendship with them and invite their assistance to Swaziland in achieving independence. The delegation assured the African statesmen that Swaziland, though her geographical location

made her economically dependent on South Africa and Mozambique, was categorically against the apartheid system and would tolerate no interference with her internal affairs.

At a mass meeting on July 22, 1965, SOBHUZA made known that he had asked the British Colonial Office for early talks on Swaziland's independence. On the same day the leader of the Imbokodvo Party, Prince MAKHOSINI DLAMINI, criticized the British government's "delaying tactics" and stressed that Swaziland was ready for independence and wanted to get rid of foreign rule and colonialism once and for all.

#### *The Swaziland Constitutional Committee*

In August 1965 a Committee was set up in Swaziland under the chairmanship of the Resident Commissioner to work out a new constitution. Other members of the Committee were two colonial officials and twelve Legco members (8 from SOBHUZA's party and 4 from the United Swaziland Association). The British administration promised the Legislative Council that political parties and groups not represented in the legislature would be given opportunity to state their views to the Committee.

In the meanwhile the Committee informed the British government that the new constitution would provide for a monarchical form of government with the paramount chief as king of Swaziland, and contemplate changing the status of the country to that of a "Protected State". In his reply the British Foreign Secretary stated that his government intended to grant Swaziland self-government in 1966 and was ready to conclude an agreement with the paramount chief, to guarantee the status of "Protected State" on the understanding that certain powers, notably in regard to external relations and defence and other matters specified in the constitution, as well as the power to amend the constitution, would be reserved to the British government.

Opposition members of the Committee repeatedly affirmed their desire for complete independence in the shortest possible time. The British Foreign Secretary assured them of his acceptance of the principle and promised independence by the end of 1969.

The draft prepared by the Constitutional Committee was presented to the British Secretary of State for the Colonies in March 1966. In April the Swaziland Legislative Council discussed the constitutional proposals and accepted them.

The principal points of the new constitution were the following:

The paramount chief of the Swazis would be recognized as King and Head of State without responsibility for external relations as well as defence and internal security, which would be retained by Her Majesty's Commissioner, who would have also control over the finances of the country and the right to require the Swaziland government to introduce and secure the passage of legislation which he considered necessary in the discharge of his responsibilities if the government should fail to do so, he might himself issue an order which would have the force of law, and he might require the government to take action or he might himself exercise any lawful function of the government for that purpose.

The legislative organ would be a bicameral parliament: the House of Assembly would be composed of twenty-four elected members and six members to be nominated by the king, as well as the Attorney General who would have no vote; the Senate would consist of six elected and six appointed members. The House of Assembly members would be elected by eight three-member constituencies. Suffrage would be



universal: every adult African would have the right to vote, as well as Europeans satisfying a three-year residence qualification.

The executive power would be exercised by a cabinet consisting of the prime minister, the deputy prime minister and up to six ministers appointed by the king. This cabinet should submit its decisions to the king for approval; the king would be entitled to return any decision and to demand its review. The king would be empowered also to prorogue or dissolve parliament.

The constitution stipulated that land and mineral rights would be vested in the paramount chief on behalf of the Swazi nation.

The position of the king and other constitutional provisions would be alterable only by a referendum supported by 75 per cent of all valid votes; the composition and powers of parliament, as well as the status and powers of the Swazi National Council, could not be altered unless supported by 75 per cent of the members voting at both houses of parliament.

The Committee intended this draft practically as the final constitution of Swaziland, subject only to minor changes to be made after independence.

The opposition parties, the Ngwane National Liberation Congress and the Swaziland Progressive Party, rejected the proposals of the Constitutional Committee and demanded the holding of a fully representative conference. One of their principal objections was the division of the country into eight three-member constituencies, which in their opinion was meant to perpetuate the existing minority regime.

In May 1966 SOBHUZA made a statement explaining that his party's foreign policy after independence would be based upon the principle of understanding with the neighbouring states and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other countries. He added that his party was aware of Swaziland's economic and geographical isolation in southern Africa, and therefore he wished to maintain close economic contacts with the Republic of South Africa, to a lesser extent also with Mozambique, and would apply for membership in the Organization of African Unity and in the United Nations. Speaking of the racial policies of South Africa, he remarked that the Swazis, while refraining from meddling with internal affairs of other countries, would not tolerate racial practices in their own country.

#### *The White Paper of October 1966*

In October 1966 the British Colonial Office issued a White Paper containing the proposals of the Constitutional Committee. The document stated that the Colonial Office and the Swaziland government had arrived at a definitive agreement on all issues, except the question of mining rights, and that there was no need to hold a separate constitutional conference. The White Paper rejected the opposition's protest concerning the constituencies. In connection with the revision of the constitution it stated that the Swaziland government had expressed the hope that without its prior consent London would, "under normal circumstances", not make use of its right to amend the constitution; and that, on the other hand, in case of the proper presentation of the views of the Swaziland government, it would not prevent a revision of the constitution. The final stand of the British government was not stated in the White Paper.

On October 26, 1966, after the publication of the White Paper, the N.N.L.C. in a statement issued at Dar es Salaam sharply condemned the unilateral action taken by the British government, without consulting the people and the political movements

of Swaziland, to safeguard British interests and support the power of reactionary tribal forces. The party reiterated its demand raised in August 1965 for the holding of a fully representative conference.

On November 27, 1966, SOBHUZA told representatives of the South African press that he wished to have talks with the Prime Minister of South Africa in order to explain to him the Swazi policy regarding the Republic of South Africa.

#### *Elections in April 1967*

Elections under the new constitution were held on April 19 and 20, 1967. At an election meeting in Manzini in early April the N.N.L.C. accused the Imbokodvo Party of conducting a vicious campaign instigating the chiefs to ban meetings of the opposition parties, and demanded freedom of speech and assembly.

Participating in the elections, in addition to SOBHUZA's Imbokodvo and ZWANE's N.N.L.C. of the opposition, were the Swaziland Progressive Party and the Swaziland United Front. The election manifestos of the government and opposition parties were identical in several points.

SOBHUZA, outbidding the opposition, demanded independence and democracy, freedom and equality of rights, and promised free and rapid economic development on all lines (emphasizing the freedom of capitalist undertaking) and a peaceful neutral foreign policy. In addition to these general points, however, the programme of ZWANE's party contained concrete demands, including a revision of the electoral system (sixty single-member constituencies), Africanization of the civil service, full employment in five years by means of industrialization and the mechanization of agriculture, promotion of the formation of labour unions, etc. The N.N.L.C. accused the Imbokodvo Party of wishing to make Swaziland one of the Bantustans of South Africa.

As could be expected, the election manoeuvres and terror policy of the SOBHUZA government had as a consequence that all 24 seats in parliament were won by the Imbokodvo candidates, who polled 78 per cent of the votes against the 20 per cent obtained by the N.N.L.C. The two other parties won all in all 2 per cent of the total votes.

After the elections ZWANE cabled the British Prime Minister demanding that the fraudulent constitution be suspended and free general elections held.

#### *The Agreement of April 1967 and the Introduction of the Constitution*

Four days after the elections, on April 24, the British government signed an agreement with SOBHUZA on turning the Swaziland Protectorate into a "Protected State".

The agreement provided that the British government reserved the right to amend or replace the constitution and would be responsible for external relations and national defence, as well as for other matters specified in the constitution. Furthermore, the British government — unless a situation arose in the territory compelling it to refrain from doing so — would grant independence to Swaziland by the end of 1969 at the latest.

The agreement came into force on the following day, April 25, simultaneously with the new constitution contained in the White Paper and promulgated as "Swaziland Constitution Order 1967".

The definitive text of the constitution is almost completely identical with the draft of the Constitutional Committee, with two substantial exceptions: the final con-



stitution diminishes the royal powers and widens essentially the powers reserved to Her Majesty's Commissioner, that is to say, to the British government.

1. For a constitutional revision to be made, the original draft required the holding of a referendum backed up by 75 per cent of the vote. Under the final constitution its amendment might be effected only by the British government upon a proposal of the Swaziland government, but the latter could not propose it before independence, and the British government had the power to revise the constitution even in the absence of such a proposal.

2. According to the original draft the British Commissioner had the right to require the Swaziland government to secure the passage of certain legislation, and, if the government had failed to do so, he might himself issue the necessary order and require the government to take action, or, if need be, he might himself exercise any lawful function of the government. The final constitution goes further: Her Majesty's Commissioner has the right to require the Swaziland government to carry out any measure that he may find necessary in the discharge of his responsibility, and in case of necessity he may implement any regulation he finds necessary.

3. As was laid down in the original draft the land and mineral rights were vested, pursuant to traditional Swazi law, in the king (paramount chief). The final constitution confers these rights upon the Swaziland government as part of the powers retained by the British government, since the British Commissioner may require the Swaziland government to take and carry out any measure he finds necessary or take care of its implementation himself.

By the terms of the constitution Swaziland has limited self-government. SOBHUZA, being invested with the functions of head of state, has appointed a member of the royal family, Prince MAKHOSINI DLAMINI, to be the first Prime Minister of Swaziland.

On May 2, 1967, in a written reply to a question put in the Commons, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations affirmed that the British government would fulfil the promise made in the White Paper of October 1966 and grant independence to Swaziland not later than at the end of 1969.

On May 11 AMBROSE ZWANE again demanded revision of the constitution and threatened that, if the government failed to act positively until June 1, he would call the Swazi population for a general strike to begin on June 5. SOBHUZA warned the civil servants that anyone joining the strikers would be dismissed immediately and even lose the right to pension. At the same time he reminded the strike organizers that they might be within their rights to use lawful methods in agitating for a constitutional revision, but that the use of pressure for this end was against the law.

On June 2 ZWANE announced that he gave up organizing the strike since the British government had stated its willingness to discuss with N.N.L.C. leaders a revision of the constitution. Four days later, on June 6, however, a representative of the British government informed ZWANE that he should present his objections to the constitution to the Swaziland government. (As for the June meeting of the United Nations Special Committee, where ZWANE described the situation in the country and the stand of the opposition.

On July 7, after the formal opening of parliament, SOBHUZA made it known that he had asked the British government to grant independence to Swaziland in September 1968 instead of at the end of 1969.

Following SOBHUZA's statement to parliament on July 7, ZWANE again demanded a constitutional revision still before independence. On August 19 he led a delegation of his party to meet the Prime Minister and other members of the government, and submitted the following demands:

(a) a fully representative conference should be convened in London as soon as possible with the participation of a full-size delegation of the N.N.L.C.;

(b) the constitution should be revised so as to reduce the king's constitutional powers and to establish 60 single-member constituencies (instead of the 12 existing three-member constituencies);

(c) "one man, one vote" to be the system to replace the "one man, three votes" principle;

(d) a new general election should be held on this basis in 1968, prior to accession to independence in September.

The N.N.L.C. delegation alleged that the party's election defeat had been due to the attitude of the chiefs who had prevented the voters from freely expressing their wishes, and demanded that the government should investigate the affair.

In a statement to the press after that meeting the Prime Minister said that the present constitution had been drafted in a democratic manner by elected members of the Legislative Council, and that the convening of a constitutional conference was within the powers of the British government, and requests for inquiries into complaints against chiefs and others should be submitted to local authorities and the Swazi courts.

ZWANE also issued a statement to the press, pointing out that even so his party had polled 20 per cent of the votes cast in the general election, and consequently, if the country had had a democratic constitution, his party ought to have obtained more than one-fifth of the seats in parliament.

On September 13 parliament authorized the Swaziland government to ask London for a final decision on the granting of independence to Swaziland on September 6, 1968, and request it to support the country's application for entry into the British Commonwealth. After this the N.N.L.C. and the Swaziland United Front submitted to the British government the N.N.L.C. demands first presented on August 19.

#### *Manipulations in the United Nations around the Question of Swaziland*

In October 1967 the UN Special Committee again took up the question of Swaziland. Considering that the opposing views of the Committee members could not be reconciled, the chairman resorted to the tested trick which had been applied with success in connection with Basutoland in July 1966 and with all three territories in September 1966: he drew up a text stating the agreement of members, studded with pompous phrases about the freely expressed wishes of the people, the return of the land taken from Africans, the protection of territorial integrity and sovereignty against South African attempts at annexation, assistance to be given to the country, and, just as in the previous two cases, he got it accepted by members of the Special Committee.

The British delegate first explained point by point his reasons for opposing the proposed text and then suggested that it should be put to the vote. The chairman expressed his willingness to proceed with the vote, if the majority so desired. But the imperialist allies of the British delegate (representatives from the United States, Australia, Venezuela and Italy), and even the Finnish delegate, stated their readiness to accept the text with some reserves. Thereupon the British delegate backed down and, while making reservations, accepted the text according to his own intentions (namely, not to raise obstacles to independence under SOBHUZA as ruler of Swaziland).



*The Swaziland Government's White Paper of December 1967 and the UN Resolution of December 19*

On November 4, 1967, the British government made public its consent to the Swaziland government's request for accession to independence on September 6, 1968, and expressed the hope that all necessary steps would be taken in time for Swaziland to become an independent state at the appointed date.

On December 14, 1967, the Swaziland government issued a White Paper, proposing some constitutional changes after independence. The most essential point concerned the mineral rights. Until then the granting of such rights was within the competence of the constitutional ruler, SOBHUZA, in agreement with the government. It was proposed now that in the exercise of this power the chief of the Swazi nation should be assisted by an advisory committee, with the mining commissioner as president and 4 to 6 members to be appointed by SOBHUZA himself from among candidates proposed by the Swazi National Council and the government. The money derived from mineral rights should be deposited in a fund established "for the benefit of the Swazi nation", which should be operated by a committee composed of members nominated by the king.

Other questions raised in the White Paper were those which the Swaziland government had proposed for discussion with the British government during the last constitutional conference: notably, compensation for the land seizures that had taken place in the past to the detriment of the Swazis, as well as the public finances of the future independent Swazi state. The British Commonwealth Secretary promised that in the summer of 1968 he would discuss the financial problems of the independent state and the aid to be given by the United Kingdom, and called upon the Swaziland government to draw up as a basis for discussion the financial plan of the country for three years from April 1, 1968.

On December 19, 1967, the United Nations General Assembly adopted resolution 2357 (XXII) on the question of 26 territories still in colonial subjection. In this resolution the General Assembly called upon the administering power to implement without delay the UN resolutions relating to Swaziland among others, reiterating its declaration that "any attempt aimed at the partial or total disruption of the national unity and the territorial integrity of colonial Territories and the establishment of military bases and installations in these Territories is incompatible with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of General Assembly resolution 1514 (XV)", and decided that "the United Nations should render all help to the peoples of these Territories in their efforts freely to decide their future status".

On January 22, 1968, the Prime Minister of Swaziland submitted the White Paper to parliament for approval; parliament made a single change, which empowered the king to appoint the members of his mineral rights committee without consulting the government. Subject to this change, the White Paper was approved also by the Senate on the following day.

*The London Conference in February 1968*

The last constitutional conference before Swaziland's accession to independence was held in London from February 19 to 23, 1968. The Swazi delegation headed by Prime Minister DLAMINI consisted of six members of parliament. The opposition parties not represented in parliament were not invited to the conference.

Although the opposition parties did not attend the conference and did not present written comments on the government's proposals, the opposition's proposals concerning the elections and the constituencies were discussed (upon the initiative of the Commonwealth Secretary whom the opposition parties had informed of their views during his visit to Swaziland in October 1967), and were rejected on the basis of hypocritical arguments set forth by the Swaziland delegation. The Swazi spokesman argued that the constitution regulating the elections had been adopted unanimously by parliament, which might, in case of necessity, amend it later by a simple majority. He stressed that parliament was a forum of the free expression of all shades of public opinion, because under the constitution it was possible for appointed members of parliament to speak on behalf of interests without parliamentary representation.

At the same time, as far as the question of such appointed members was concerned, the Swaziland delegation, upon the insistence of the British government, agreed to delete the two restrictions concerning appointed members of parliament. One of the provisions was that no person who had stood for election but had failed might be delegated as an appointed member; and the other stipulated that an appointed member of parliament might represent only economic, social or cultural interests. The omission of these two restrictions practically enabled any defeated candidate of a political party to take the floor in parliament as an appointed member. In fact, however, this possibility was illusory since alone the king (SOBHUZA) had the right to appoint such members.

At the conference the British and Swazi governments signed an official agreement on the accession of Swaziland to independence on September 6, 1968.

The main issues discussed at the conference concerned the mineral rights and the compensations for the alienated land.

In the matter of the mineral rights the Swaziland delegation persisted in SOBHUZA's position endorsed by both houses of parliament, which had given the king full powers in this respect, to the total exclusion of interference from the government. True, the British delegation expressed its regret over the modification of the related provision of the 1967 constitution, under which the mineral rights were vested in the king who was assisted by the government. However, the Swaziland delegation held on to its position, hypocritically giving as a reason that that was the will of the Swazis, and that in case of a different arrangement the government would be unable to secure the support of the Swazi people for the constitution.

On the other hand, the demand of the Swaziland delegation for compensations met with flat refusal on the part of the British delegation. As a practical solution the British delegation suggested that the Swaziland government should prepare, within the framework of its development plans, an appropriate scheme for the settlement of the land issue, and that the question of British assistance for financing the land settlement should also be put on the agenda of the negotiations for British assistance to be provided to Swaziland. But the Swaziland delegation thought that recognition of the Swazis' land rights was entirely independent of any programme for development aid.

Thus this question remained unsolved. But the Prime Minister, DLAMINI, upon arrival from London, stated in his report to parliament early in March that, "in this question we have not been defeated, and will never acknowledge defeat", and he added that everyone in Swaziland was aware that the land question was a serious problem to which a solution must be found.



On May 22, 1968, the UN Special Committee on decolonization adopted a resolution in which the General Assembly, recalling its relevant resolutions and recommendations.

"*Regrets* that no agreement has been reached between the administering Power and the people of Swaziland concerning the latter's claim for compensation to be paid for land alienated from them;

"*Reiterates* its previous request that the administering Power take immediate steps to ensure the return to the indigenous inhabitants of all the land alienated from them or to pay compensation for the alienated land in accordance with the expressed wishes of the people;

"*Reiterates* further its request that the administering Power take all appropriate action to bring about the economic independence of Swaziland vis-à-vis South Africa, to protect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Territory in view of the interventionist policies of the racist régime in South Africa and to enable the Territory to achieve genuine and complete independence."

#### *Accession to Independence*

Under the terms of the agreement reached at the conference in February, Swaziland became an independent state on September 6, 1968, and was admitted to membership of the United Nations on September 24.

However, this did not mean complete independence for the country. The affairs of security and the public finances remained in the hands of the British government, which also appointed the government of the new state. It was no accident that one of the most important departments, the Ministry of Finance, Trade and Industry, was headed by a South African, to ensure that the newly independent state continued in the future to be economically at the mercy of the Republic of South Africa. The same idea appeared from a statement made during the independence celebration by the Prime Minister of Swaziland, Prince MAKHOSINI DLAMINI, who said that the country had to promote its own interests and rely upon the realities.

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#### CHAPTER XII

#### BRITISH CENTRAL AFRICA

The post-war history of the British Central African colonies is one of the most outrageous chapters in the whole history of the British colonial empire.

As is known, the BLEDISLOE Commission,<sup>1</sup> though favouring in principle a federation of the three colonies, was of the opinion that, because of the difference in their stage of development and owing to the policy of racial discrimination practised by the settler government of Southern Rhodesia, closer union could be achieved only in a distant future. That is why for the time being the Commission opposed the plan of federation and proposed instead that an inter-territorial council be set up to co-ordinate the administration of the three colonies. The proposal was approved by the British government, but it could not be carried out in the times of war. In 1945 the BLEDISLOE proposal was taken up, and a "Central African Council" was established. This body, however, did not last long. Since the Council was presided over by the British Governor of Southern Rhodesia, and it had only the right of consultation, the political leaders of the Southern Rhodesian settlers would have no part in it.

In February 1949 leaders of the settlers of the three colonies (HUGGINS, WELENSKY and others) met at Victoria Falls<sup>2</sup> to work out an agreed plan for combining the three territories in a federation. The conference brought no result because of the extremist stand of HUGGINS. Unlike his fellow representatives from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, who were indeed for a federation of the three colonies and wanted to grant the Africans also some degree of representation in a future federal parliament, HUGGINS demanded in fact the merger of those territories and was categorically against any African representation in a federal parliament.

The Africans resolutely opposed both merger and federation because they were fully aware that either step would bring with it unbridled despotic white rule. A participant of the Victoria Falls conference, Colonel STUART GORE-BROWNE from Northern Rhodesia, wrote this in an article published by the *Northern News*:

"Almost at once it became clear that the African reaction was one of ever-increasing opposition to the whole idea of federation, which most Africans refused to consider as in any way different from amalgamation . . . The African soon became convinced that his freedom was at stake."

In November 1949 the Northern Rhodesia settlers submitted a motion to the Legislative Council, calling upon the government to consent to drafting the federal

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. II, p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> That was called the "Second Victoria Falls Conference". The first conference had been held as far back as 1936. See Vol. II, p. 187.



plan. But the government refused to take a stand on the grounds that the issue of federation was still an open question, while the ex-officio members of the legislature and the unofficial members appointed by the Governor abstained from the vote. The Africans viewed this conduct as a breach of promise on the part of the British government.

The British Colonial Secretary convened a conference in London for January 1951 to elaborate a plan for a federation of the Central African colonies. The conference was prepared by a committee whose members as well as the participants of the conference were all delegated from the Colonial Office and other departments or were officials of the Central African colonial administrations, to the total exclusion of the interested Africans. Both the Committee and the conference in their reports intentionally gave a false picture of the situation in British Central Africa — mainly Southern Rhodesia. As regards Southern Rhodesia it was stated in the report:<sup>1</sup>

“Not only do the inhabitants of the Reserves and Special Native Areas have absolute security of tenure but all Africans have a constitutional right to reside in those areas.”

And in another place: “Apparent. . . is Southern Rhodesia’s original concept that both races would be permitted to develop to the utmost of their capabilities, each in its own geographical area . . . without competition from the other race . . .”

As is stated already in Volume II (pp. 181–190) and will be seen more clearly below, just the contrary of the above allegations was true.

The Survey gave a likewise false picture of the other two colonies as follows:

“It is the policy of the Government of both Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to lead the African along the path to full partnership, encouraging him to retain all that is laudable in his own culture, while at the same time adapting his outlook and way of life to enable him eventually to play, to the limit of his capabilities, a full part in the progress of the territory and to enjoy a commensurate reward. Neither Northern Rhodesia nor Nyasaland has any policy of racial separation.”

The report of the conference was made public in March and it painted things in still brighter colours:

“ . . . since 1939 the economic development of all three Central African Territories had gone forward rapidly and the financial position of the two northern territories had improved substantially in relation to Southern Rhodesia . . . rapid economic progress was being made by all the territories . . . the inequality between them was growing less . . . differences, although important, relate largely to method and timing and that the ultimate objective of all three Governments is broadly the same, namely the economic, social and political advancement of the Africans in partnership with the Europeans . . . very considerable advances have been made in Southern Rhodesia, where there has been a strong reaction against extreme policies elsewhere . . . economic and political partnership between Europeans and Africans is the only policy which can succeed in the conditions of Central Africa.”<sup>2</sup>

Thus it was only natural that the conference recommended the federalization of the three territories. A pertinent evaluative summary of the conference was given by GUY CLUTTON-BROCK:

<sup>1</sup> Comparative Survey of Native Policy in Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland prepared by a Committee of the Central African Council for the Conference on Closer Association in Central Africa. Published by the Southern Rhodesia Government.

<sup>2</sup> Report of the Conference on Closer Association in Central Africa, March 1951, London. Published by the Southern Rhodesia Government and by H.M.S.O. Cmd. 8233.

“This conclusion was reached in spite of the fact that the history of Southern Rhodesia had shown a progressive implementation of the policy of separation or ‘apartheid’ through legislation based on the South African model . . . The Conference was a body of European civil servants of the United Kingdom and of the three territories, competent enough to report upon the mechanics of their departments, but sitting 6,000 miles away from the territories on which they were required to report. Without any impartial survey of the situation having been made since 1939, when the Bledisloe Commission reported emphatically against Federation, the Conference recommended the Federation of the three territories.”<sup>1</sup>

The report, which the British government submitted to the Commons for consideration on June 13, was given a mixed reception in the press.

The *Observer* found that the proposals deserved consideration, but reminded that the Africans should be allowed to have a say in framing the new constitution, under which some degree of self-government must not only be promised but also granted to the Africans.

The *Scotsman* expressed the concern that the Africans would reject the idea of an association with Southern Rhodesia, in view of the settler government’s racial policies, and would think little of safeguards, knowing how valueless such measures had been in South Africa. The *New Statesman* remarked only that the Colonial Office was moving too fast.

The *Daily Worker* was the only press organ to say in open terms that the Labour government intended the new constitution “to divert the growing independence movement”.

The report of the London conference and the Colonial Secretary’s motion in Parliament caused unanimous indignation among the Africans, who regarded the plan of federation as an attempt to extend the racist policies of the Southern Rhodesia settlers to the other two territories of Central Africa. The African National Congress in all three territories immediately launched a campaign against federation and prepared an appeal to the United Nations. And in London HASTINGS BANDA issued a protest pamphlet, which he dispatched to Africa in a thousand copies.

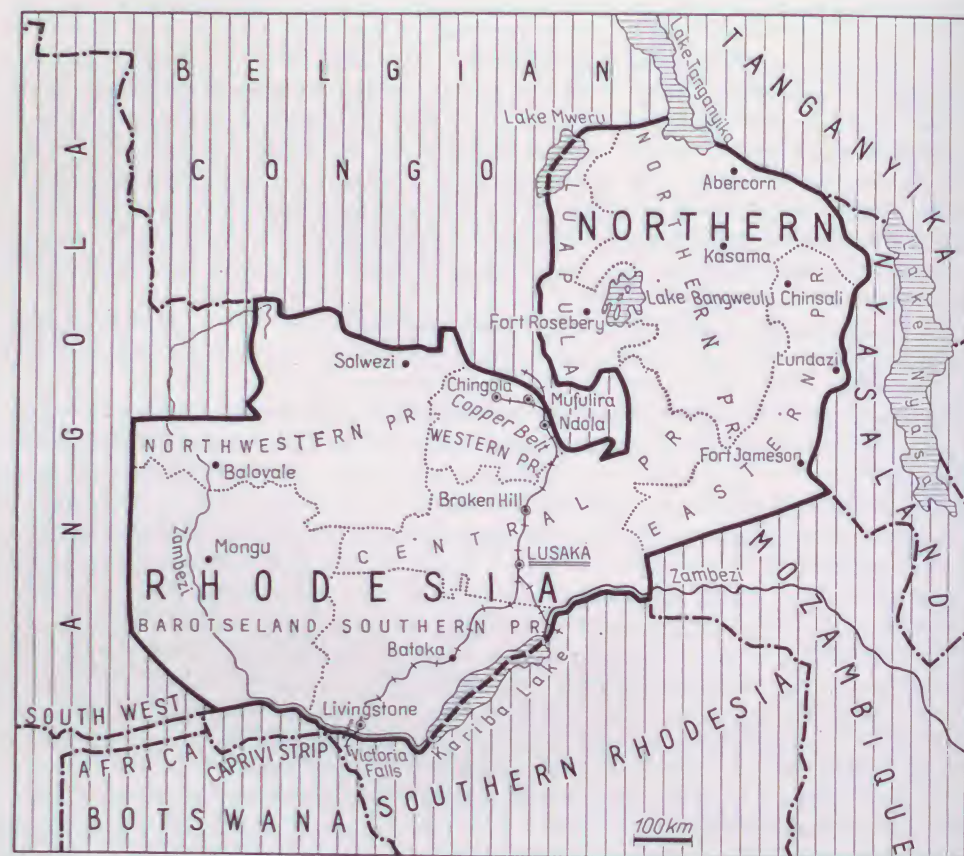
The stand of the European settlers was not uniform. Their majority were for the plan of federation, but at the same time — chiefly in Southern Rhodesia — they were against it because they feared that it would imply the Colonial Office’s control over the Southern Rhodesian government, too. And in Northern Rhodesia they opposed the plan because, like the Africans, they were afraid that federation would result in the imposition of the Southern Rhodesian regime in their country.

Northern Rhodesia received the visit of JAMES GRIFFITHS, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in August 1951, and Southern Rhodesia was visited by GORDON WALKER, the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations, in September 1951. GRIFFITHS talked with representatives of the African National Congress, tried to persuade them not to boycott the conference on federation. The Africans, however, were not inclined even to speak about it, for that would have given an appearance of their acquiescence in the idea of federation. In Southern Rhodesia WALKER called together the chiefs to hear their opinion. He did get what he wanted: all chiefs without exception most categorically rejected the idea. (Some said they would be willing to accept federation only on condition that the Protectorate regime prevailing in the other two territories should be extended to Southern Rhodesia.) Thereupon PATRICK B. FLETCHER, the Minister for Native Affairs of Southern Rhodesia, when

<sup>1</sup> G. CLUTTON-BROCK, *Dawn in Nyasaland*, London, 1959, pp. 41–42.



reporting to the legislature on the talks with GORDON WALKER, stated forthrightly: it was for governments alone to discuss federation and make decision, the African opinion did not count. This statement roused violent indignation in the British press. The *Manchester Guardian*, for example, remarked in its issue of September 13 that African opinion might not count in Salisbury but it certainly did in Britain. It wrote: "No British Government, of whatever political colour, is likely to back the Federation plan if Africans remain as overwhelmingly opposed to it as they now appear to be."



Not only the Congress but the entire people and their tribal organs took up the fight against federation in the making. The African stand against federation was pertinently expressed by a speaker in the African Representative Council at its meeting on September 12, 1951: "We all know very well that the aim of British policy in Africa was clear and unequivocal, namely ultimate self-government but . . . It did not seem to be true of Northern Rhodesia . . . the aim of policy was not self-government in the sense of majority rule, but an extremely ambiguous term of partnership of the white and black community. I have used this word 'ambiguous' because partnership is only used on lips and paper and is not in practice. We are looked on as inferiors, and what the European is striving for is European supremacy

. . . We Africans know the Colonial Office government very well and the benefits we have received from this government. We are quite determined in rejecting federal government because we are well aware of the attitude of most Europeans towards the African people in this country. There is no doubt about this . . . I say that if any union comes at all it will have to be imposed by brute force and I can assure you that this territory of Northern Rhodesia will not be at peace."<sup>1</sup>

During preparations for federation the colonialists, to reassure the Africans, said on a number of occasions that nothing would happen without their consent and over their heads. When the Secretary of Native Affairs of the Colonial Administration was reminded of these promises at the meeting of the same African Representative Council on December 5, 1951, he replied with impudent frankness: "You said that you had been informed that Africans' consent would be obtained first. I don't remember Africans ever being assured that their consent would first have to be obtained. They were assured that they would be consulted and they have been consulted."<sup>2</sup>

The Africans had to be contented with the extraparliamentary African Representative Council set up in 1946, where the attending chiefs and their advisers could state their opinions but could not decide on the merits.

#### *The Victoria Falls Conference in September 1951*

Another conference was opened at Victoria Falls on September 18, 1951. It was attended by five Africans on behalf of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, but the African National Congress refused to send its representatives and even to discuss federation, while Africans in Southern Rhodesia did not get a chance either to delegate anyone. Southern Rhodesia was represented by P. B. FLETCHER, the extreme rightist Minister for Native Affairs of the settler government.

The official communiqué said that the conference, except the five African delegates, was favourable to the idea of closer association if majorities from the three territories were in favour. It stated further that federation should be based on economic and political "partnership" between Africans and Europeans, and that Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland should, also within federation, retain their protective status, their political development should be the responsibility of the Colonial Office, and they would settle the land issue by themselves. GRIFFITHS, who played the leading role at the conference, gave as his opinion that if the three questions of the greatest concern to Africans (land issue, political advancement, and the danger of amalgamation with Southern Rhodesia) were settled, African opposition would gradually disappear before the renewed conference met in nine months' time (July 1952). The Liberal settler JOHN MOFFAT opined that the Africans from Northern Rhodesia would be willing to accept federation if "partnership" was first defined and then put into practice.

However, the Victoria Falls decision was repudiated both by the Africans and the Southern Rhodesia settlers. Africans in the mining areas of Northern Rhodesia immediately held a meeting of protest against the conference decision, and the Southern Rhodesia settlers claimed that the conference had been a failure. They argued the point that if federation were carried into effect against the wishes of the Africans, this would put a weapon in the hands of MALAN, who would then ask — and not without reason — why, if this could be done, all three territories should not

<sup>1</sup> D. SIWALE, *African Representative Council Proceedings*: 12 September 1951, cols. 5-8.

<sup>2</sup> *Proceedings*: 5 December 1951, col. 56.



be annexed to the Union, since annexation, no matter how strongly they opposed it, would be economically much more advantageous to them.<sup>1</sup>

Characteristically, in reporting on the conference, *The Times* expressed the opinion that to impose federation upon the Africans would be a fatal step, which would entail serious consequences all over Africa.

In October 1951 the Labour government in Britain was succeeded by a Conservative government.

### *The Tory Government's Policy*

In the name of the Tory government the new Colonial Secretary, OLIVER LYTTLETON, made a policy statement to the House of Commons on November 21. Labourites and Conservatives did not essentially differ in their views, since they were all in favour of federation. But, while the Labour Party found the main difficulty to be in the African objections and therefore tried hard to overcome them, the Conservatives cared little about African opinion, they thought the main obstacle to be that federation was opposed even by a considerable section of the settlers. This difference between the views of the two parties corresponded to the difference between their policies with regard to the aim of federation. The fact was that, while the Labourites wished to federate the three territories in order to upset the annexationist plan of the Union of South Africa, the Conservatives — although they also reckoned with this contingency and rather often even reminded the Africans of it — wanted to use the scheme for perpetuating European rule over those territories.

The British government pursued a vacillating, inconsistent policy in the matter of federation. The fear of the expansionism of the Union of South Africa and the ever growing British capital interests in the copper production of Northern Rhodesia induced the British government, for the sake of the success of federation, to grant favours to the settlers, to make concessions to their antidemocratic and anti-African regime. At the same time the world's public opinion, which was given expression day after day in the United Nations, as well as the pressure of liberal opinion within the country, and the increasing resistance of Africans in the territories to be federated — all this compelled the British government to stand up, at least in semblance, for the Africans once in a while and to try to restrain the settlers. It had to cope, first of all, with the liberal opinion manifested by the Parliamentary Labour opposition. Namely the Labourites — who, as could be seen, when in power had a considerable share in preparing the federation plan — now that they were in opposition, were bent on disclosing the vulnerable spots of federal government and British colonial administration and using them as weapons in their struggle against the Tory government.

The Africans in all three territories adopted a clear and consistent position against federation and fought for its liquidation all the time. (This will be discussed in more detail later, in the chapters on the post-war history of the countries of the federation.)

### *Huggins's Manoeuvres*

To put down the opposition of the Southern Rhodesia settlers, Sir GODFREY HUGGINS at the annual conference of his party held in the early days of October, instead of trying to win them over to his views, attempted to convince them — with

<sup>1</sup> *Sunday Times*, Sept. 23, 1951.

rather good success — by vilifying the Africans, making biting criticism of the Rhodesia visits by GRIFFITHS and WALKER, of the British government and the Victoria Falls conference. With this rude manoeuvre, however, he only confirmed the Africans in their opposition and in their distrust of the proponents of federation, and even provided the liberal opponents of federation in Britain with fresh arguments against his own policy.

In the Southern Rhodesian Parliament on November 19, and then at a gala dinner in Ndola on December 2, HUGGINS hypocritically spoke of "partnership", which he meant to be a relationship between the junior and the senior partner working for the same firm, in which neither of them would be superior to the other, but the senior (in this case the European) would help the junior (the African) to become his equal: "We do not pretend there is any equality of partnership at present but the native has joined the firm and has his foot on the lower rungs of the ladder."

In January 1952 HUGGINS went to London to win the British government over to the settlers' cause. He stressed mainly two things: the British government should desist from appointing an extraparliamentary "Minister for African Interests" to the federal government, and that the Africans should elect the members of parliament not on a separate roll but in common with the settlers. HUGGINS's negotiations were supported by a large part of British conservative opinion. On January 22, 1952, *The Times* expressed the hope that the views of the Southern Rhodesia settlers would be duly taken into consideration, which had not been done at the Victoria Falls conference preoccupied with the views of Africans; and JULIAN AMERY told the House of Commons that the British government as the trustee, if it thought that federation was for the benefit of the Africans, should bring it about even if the Africans were against it.

HUGGINS obviously found a common language with the British government, for before leaving London he stated with satisfaction that the views had been clarified, the proposed federal constitution would be presented by the end of March, that the final decision would be made at the conference to be held in London towards the end of April, and that if the governments agreed, the only thing to do would be to obtain the consent of the Southern Rhodesia electorate (meaning the settlers) and the assent of the British Parliament.

The *Manchester Guardian*, which was usually making propaganda for federation, in its issue of March 3, 1952, had published a letter from SINCLAIR SHAW of Edinburgh, who claimed that the federation plan was at variance with the recommendations of the impartial BLEDISLOE Commission; the proposals, which affected over six million Africans, had been devised by British officials without consulting the Africans. The interests and the honour of Britain demanded that the British government should not force the Africans into a federation in whose 36-member parliament there would be only four African-elected members. African resistance could be overcome only if Africans were to obtain equal representation with Europeans.

### *Debate on Federation in the British Parliament*

The British Parliament took up the question of federation on March 5, 1952. The speaker of the opposition, GRIFFITHS, claimed that federation was needed to protect the Central African countries from the Union of South Africa, which was striving to incorporate those territories. On the other hand, he criticized the government for trying to solve the problem without African participation, for having had talks with HUGGINS without inviting Africans to attend, and for advancing for April the date



of the conference proposed for July. All this, instead of winning the Africans for the cause, he said, still confirmed their suspicion that federation would be imposed against their will.

Colonial Secretary LYTTTELTON also spoke in favour of federation, but he did not claim defence against South Africa, he rather stressed that the aim was to ensure the economic development of the three territories. He said that he had discussed with HUGGINS only the agenda for a conference which would consider the objections to the draft proposals and draw up the final text; and that after a few months in which this text would be widely discussed, the constitution for federation would be definitively adopted or rejected at the next conference in July.

LYTTTELTON and all speakers of the Conservative Party spoke as if they had no doubt that Africans would join in the discussion.

At the same time the Africans in all three territories held to their position against all forms of federation. In February and March demonstrations and protest meetings were held one after another in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

HASTINGS BANDA, who was in London at the time, said that the imposition of federation would crush all African hope of self-government. "We want to stay under the Government of the United Kingdom", he said. "Don't sell us because you want copper."

British public opinion also raised its voice of protest and warning. The Church of Scotland conference in Glasgow passed a unanimous resolution stating that federation should not be imposed without consulting the Africans. The *Manchester Guardian* opined that the Africans might be satisfied of the good intentions of the champions of federation, but they could not be persuaded by what LYTTTELTON and GRIFFITHS said but only what HUGGINS and WELENSKY did. The paper wrote: "A yard of practical advance along such lines is worth a furlong of constitutional guarantee."

#### *The London Conference in April 1952 and the White Paper of June*

The African delegations from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland refused to take part in the conference held at London in April 1952. They explained that their peoples had commissioned them not to discuss federation but to reaffirm their unanimous opposition to any form of association with Southern Rhodesia. The delegates wrote a letter which appeared in *The Times* on April 29, stating among other things:

"We oppose Central African Federation on principle on the following grounds. We fear the extension to Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland of the native policy of Southern Rhodesia if the three territories are federated. History has shown that that has happened in the Union of South Africa where the Boer policy has supplanted the liberal British policy of Cape Colony completely. The native policy of Southern Rhodesia approximates more closely to native policy in the Union of South Africa than to native policy in any other British African territory. In Southern Rhodesia Africans are virtually excluded from the franchise by the high income qualification, £250 a year. The two races are segregated (*apartheid*) on different areas of land by law. Forty-eight million acres of land are reserved for 136,000 Europeans, while 37 million acres are reserved for two million Africans. No African may own land in any town and an African may live in a 'location' near a town while employed by a European. No skilled work may be done by an African in any urban area. No African trade union is legally recognized. An African requires a 'pass' to move from one district

to another while a European does not. An unemployed African is compelled to render forced labour while an unemployed European is not."<sup>1</sup>

And finally they added that if the object of federation was to keep out the South Africa settlers and their ideas, as was alleged, that could easily be done without federation.

The scheme approved at the April conference was made public on June 18 in a White Paper as a basis for further discussion. The draft constitution proposed a 36-member Federal Parliament composed of a British-appointed president and 35 members: 26 members would represent the interests of Europeans (officially: "not specially charged with African representation"), and the remaining 9 members would represent Africans. The former category was to be elected by qualified voters, among whom there were hardly a few Africans. That is to say, while they might in theory belong to any race, in practice all 26 members were Europeans: 14 would be elected by the settlers in Southern Rhodesia, 8 in Northern Rhodesia, and 4 in Nyasaland. Of the nine members three (1 European and 2 Africans) came from each territory. In Southern Rhodesia all three were to be elected (just like the 26 members) by the settlers, in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland the European member was to be nominated by the British Governor, and the two African members would be elected indirectly by the African electorate.

Pursuant to the constitution all important matters of the three territories should be the responsibilities of the Federal government (external affairs, defence and the finances, taxes and customs, immigration, railways, posts, telegraphs, aviation, etc.). The constitution specified the functions of the territorial legislatures and those which might be exercised in common with the Federal authorities, but at the same time the Federal and territorial governments could delegate power to each other, while the British government had the right to invalidate any act passed by the Federal Parliament. The latter was empowered to change the constitution by a two-thirds vote, while the British Governor-General of the Federation also had the right to revise any provision of the constitution and the electoral law.

The White Paper ended with the statement that the aim of the scheme was to safeguard the interests "of the three territories and all their inhabitants." By "safeguarding the interests of the three territories" the British government meant essentially to protect Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland against the supremacy of the Southern Rhodesia settlers under the guise of Federation. It succeeded in achieving this so that the Federal Parliament would have 18 members from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland against 17 members from Southern Rhodesia. The white minority of the population had its interests completely safeguarded, since it had full control of the Federal Parliament. But the interests of the vast African majority could in no way be protected by the nine members specially charged with African representation, since only six of them were Africans, and only three even of the six were elected by Africans. Even if all nine members had stood up for African interests, they would have been powerless against the 26 settler representatives. The African interests found no protection either in the Federal Parliament or in the Federal government to be formed by the majority party of the settlers. Therefore the British government deemed it necessary to include in the draft constitution a further safety clause which, at least outwardly, would provide an opportunity for the Africans to appeal to the British government to change such legislation approved by the Federal Parliament as was prejudicial to African interests, implied racial discrimination, etc. The

<sup>1</sup> PHILIP MASON, *Year of Decision*, Oxford, 1960, p. 37.



same purpose was to be served by the constitutional provision which established the so-called "African Affairs Board" and which gave rise to the most telling criticism of the draft. In the original conception of the British government the Board should have been placed under the presidency of the Minister for African Interests (to be appointed by the Governor-General, not by the Federal Prime Minister) with three members each from three territories — the respective Secretary of Native Affairs, one member (either African or European) of the territorial legislature and an African member. Since this proposed composition of the Board (especially the appointment of a minister by the Governor-General) was violently opposed by the settlers (particularly those of Southern Rhodesia), this provision was changed at the conference of April 1952. According to the draft published in the White Paper of June, the African Affairs Board would be composed of a president appointed by the Governor-General and six members (one European and one African from each of the three territories) to be appointed by the Governors of the respective territories. Although the Southern Rhodesia settlers were not satisfied with this solution, the draft was submitted in this form to the conference of January 1953. How illusory the assurance provided by the Board to the Africans was could soon be seen from the events.

#### *The London Conference of January 1953*

The final text of the constitution was approved by the London conference which opened on January 1, 1953, with the participation of only official persons and representatives of the settlers. Africans did not attend. The conference was still in session when a delegation of chiefs from Nyasaland arrived in London to appeal to the Queen, but the Colonial Secretary did not allow the delegates to see the sovereign, on the ground that they had no status as representatives of Nyasaland. Before leaving London the delegation wrote a letter to *The Times* in which it warned that: "... if federation is imposed on us, the British Government need have no illusions that it will not be resisted by Africans. All measures, effective and prolonged, will be taken by us to defeat it and Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia will cease to be happy and peaceful countries."

On the same day as this letter was published by *The Times*, February 5, 1953, the final text of the federal constitution approved by the January conference was made public. The only substantial change made by the conference was in respect of the so-called African Affairs Board: upon the demand of the Southern Rhodesia settlers it was decided that the Board should be a standing committee of parliament. The meaning of this modification was clear: if the constitution admitted only four African-elected Africans among the 59 members of the Federal Parliament, it was evident that the new composition of the Board was intended to ensure that the settlers' interests prevailed also in this body, which was supposed to represent African interests.

#### *The Settlers and British Public Opinion*

The Southern Rhodesia settlers refused to make any political concession to the Africans. Their most vociferous spokesman, G. HUGGINS, told a press conference on January 29 that the extension of the franchise would be "fatal", that there would be no Africans in a federal government: "They are quite incapable of playing a full

part. If you had studied them you would realize how hopeless they are. They may even have a university degree but their background is all wrong."

The extremist elements of the settlers were alarmed even at the little concession made to Africans in the proposal of the government. The same HUGGINS, in a speech in the United Central Africa Association, tried to reassure them that they had nothing to fear from the Africanization of parliament: "There is no need to fear a black Parliament. The whole thing is fantastic; it would not happen in fifty or sixty years..." and he added that Europeans could after all make laws to ensure their survival; if many Africans registered as voters, the qualifications could always be raised.

British public opinion on the whole was in favour of federation, while not only liberal politicians but also conservative circles were critical of the government's proposal because of its disregard for the African point of view.

On January 19 *The Times* expressed its concern about the conclusions of the conference. It emphasized that what was needed was not only an agreement for agreement's sake, but an agreement that would be consistent with the pledges made to the Africans. And on March 6 again, while admitting that British public opinion was in favour of federation in general, the paper stressed that its considerations were useless without securing the confidence of Africans, otherwise the federation plan should be dropped.

L. B. GREAVES, Secretary of the Conference of British Missionary Societies, issued a pamphlet summing up in five points the prerequisites for any plan of federation: (1) Racial discrimination in university education should be eliminated. (2) The pass laws should be modified. (3) The laws and rules constituting an industrial colour bar should be withdrawn. (4) African membership of the Legislative Councils in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland should be equal in numbers to European unofficial membership. (5) In Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland measures should be taken to prepare Africans for official posts held by Europeans.

At the meeting of the Commons on March 25, 1953, the Labour Party was against neither federation in general nor the constitution bill, it raised only two objections in its proposed amendment; namely, that the safeguards of the protection of African interests were inadequate, and that the scheme was imposed against the will of the Africans. Parliament rejected Labour's amendment by 304 votes to 260. The Bill was thus passed.

Shortly after the London decision a referendum was held in Southern Rhodesia. Eighty-two per cent of the electorate (only Europeans) took part in the referendum, 25,570 voted for federation and 14,729 against it.<sup>1</sup>

#### *The Establishment of Federation*

The British Parliament enacted the federation of the two Rhodesias and Nyasaland in July 1953, and the Federation was established on August 1.

The imposition of federation and its constitution exemplified the antidemocratic and anti-African policy of the imperialist colonial powers, and the Federal government was a colonial organ constituted by British officials and settlers. The African

<sup>1</sup>It is characteristic that the vote was almost identical with that taken thirty years before, in 1924, on whether Southern Rhodesia should join the Union of South Africa.



population had no say in the administration, and Africans first had no share of the government, and even later they had only a minimal degree of representation.

The British government and the various settler groups were agreed on setting up the Federation, but for different reasons. The British government saw in federation a guarantee to counteract the expansionist plans of the Union of South Africa, while the settlers thought that the fact of the Federation being governed from Southern Rhodesia, which had a certain measure of independence from the British government, would secure the permanence of "white rule" and the absolute enforcement of the settlers' interests against the African aspirations for independence. Since, however, the African populations of all three territories were resolutely against federation, both the British government and the settlers, in order to calm the African discontent, tried to make them believe that federation was to their economic benefit. The truth was, however, that while the Federation was indeed economically beneficial to the settlers of all three territories, it did considerable harm to the economic situation of the entire African population.<sup>1</sup>

It follows from all this that the history of the Federation is not part of the history of African peoples, but it is the story of the political manoeuvres of the colonialists — the British government and the white settlers. And this episode may be considered part of the history of African peoples in so far as these manoeuvres influenced the course of events in the three territories. And since events developed differently, the impact of federation upon the history of the African peoples will be discussed in the chapters dealing with the individual countries. This chapter is confined to a brief outline of the policy of the colonialists, the struggle between the British government and the settlers, as well as the struggle for the dissolution of the Federation, on the one side, and that of the settlers for its maintenance, on the other.

#### *The Settler Parties in the Federation*

In the Federation, and consequently in its three countries, three tendencies were conflicting in the policy of the settlers: (1) The Federal Party of ROY WELENSKY and his followers, which was renamed the United Federal Party after its merger in 1958 with the United Rhodesia Party. (2) The right wing of WELENSKY's party, emerging as an independent political organization called the Dominion Party in 1958. (3) The liberals: originally the left-wing elements of the Federal Party, from 1955 the Capricorn Africa Society, from 1958 GARFIELD TODD's Central African Party, and from 1960 JOHN MOFFAT's Northern Rhodesian Liberal Party.

There were differences between WELENSKY and the extremists, but they were all agreed on the essentials (colonialism, anti-Africanism). The liberals differed also in principle from both parties, but they were not consistent in their liberalism.

Conflicts and factionalism existed within each group, though not so much with regard to questions of principle, but rather because of the tactics to be employed. The struggle between settler groups centred mainly on three issues:

1. All settler groups, including the liberals, were in favour of the Federation, and were against giving the member countries the right to secede. But while the United Federal Party and the Dominion Party strove to change the Federation into an independent dominion, that is, to have it withdrawn from under the authority of the British government, the liberal parties, as against the extreme antidemocratic,

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 385 and 386.

anti-African policy of the right-wing settler parties, thought it necessary to uphold the British colonial administration to promote their own conception of a wholesome, democratic development of the three federated countries.

2. The extreme right wanted the Federation (or only Southern Rhodesia in case of the disintegration of the Federation owing to the possible secession of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) to join the Union of South Africa. This idea was opposed not only by the liberals but also by WELENSKY's right-wing party.

3. The policies of all three settler groups were based on racial prejudices. They all treated the Africans as inferior people, and they all advocated the maintenance of the colonial system and "white rule", but they all sought this aim along different lines. The extreme right wanted to carry out the complete segregation and dispossession of Africans, that is to say, they pursued the apartheid policies of the Union of South Africa. WELENSKY and his supporters, with a view to breaking down the resistance of Africans, deemed it necessary to grant them a certain minimum of rights and representation in government organs, but only to such an extent as to ensure the settler minority an overwhelming majority both in the legislature and in the government. Finally, the liberal parties proclaimed the equality of Africans, but they interpreted this to mean that the vast majority (97 to 98 per cent) of the population should be represented on an equal footing with the insignificant (2 to 2.5 per cent) settler minority.

The struggle between the settlers on the level of federation was fought politically around the federal constitution and the federal elections.

#### *Changes in the Constitution in 1957*

The so-called constitutional reform essentially consisted of a slight change in the composition of the Federal Parliament. The number of the members was raised from 35 to 59, and the number of "representatives of African interests", with 6 Africans added, was raised from 9 to 15.

Before 1957 there was no difference between European and African franchise, but the right to vote was made subject to high property qualifications so that there were only an insignificant number of qualified voters among the Rhodesian Africans. (In Nyasaland no election was held originally, the four Nyasaland members of the Federal Parliament were appointed by the Governor, and from 1955 the high property qualification allowed only an insignificant number of Africans to obtain the right to vote.) In practice 29 out of 35 members were elected by Europeans.

Before the reform, two of the representatives of African interests both in Northern Rhodesia and in Nyasaland were indirectly elected by the Africans themselves, and the one European member from each territory was nominated by the Governor. All three from Southern Rhodesia were elected by an electorate in which Europeans were overwhelming.

The revised constitution also made no difference on paper between Europeans and Africans, but it introduced two kinds of elective franchise, "ordinary" and "special". Ordinary franchise was subject to higher income and other qualifications than the special franchise, so that the higher qualifications admitted an overwhelming number of Europeans while the lower ones admitted Africans. The 44 members who under the law did not specifically represent African interests were elected by the higher list of ordinary voters, that is practically by Europeans without any African vote. The reform did not affect the old provisions concerning the election or appoint-



ment of the former nine "representatives of African interests", but it established a "common roll" of voters with ordinary and special franchise for the election of the six additional African members representing African interests. And since the number of European voters was many times that of African voters, this meant practically that the six Africans were also elected by an electorate with a strong European element.

In other words: the European settlers (as ordinary voters) elected 44 members, plus 3 (one European and two Africans) from Southern Rhodesia to represent "African interests" under the old rule, plus 6 new representatives of African interests on the "common roll", that is to say, 53 out of 59, while African voters, just as in the past, elected two members from Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland each to represent African interests.

Accordingly among the 60 members of the Federal Parliament there were 48 Europeans (45 elected and 2 nominated members, plus an appointed president) and 12 Africans (of whom 4 were elected indirectly by Africans, 2 by the Rhodesia settlers, and 6 by the practically purely European electorate on the "common roll").

For the rise in the number of the members of parliament the government gave as a reason that 36 members were not enough to ensure the effective work of parliament (to form the required number of committees). This was the pretext. The real reason was that, under the pressure of outside developments and internal events (the appearance of the independent Sudan and Ghana in the United Nations, the *loi-cadre* in the French colonies, the growing restlessness of the African populations of the federated territories), the colonial government found it necessary to make sham concessions (raising the number of African members of the Federal Parliament, one step towards the enfranchisement of Africans) in order to soothe the anti-Federation public sentiment of the African population. At the same time, however, it had to reckon with the European settlers, who saw their own rule threatened by even the slightest real gain of Africans. Therefore it had to carry out the reform so as to secure the settlers' rule in spite of the apparent extension of African rights. This is what the above-outlined changes in the composition of parliament and the electoral system were intended to achieve.

To reassure the Africans, the government could point out that the number of African members of parliament had been raised twofold (from 6 to 12) and that of representatives of African interests by nearly 70 per cent (from 9 to 15). To reassure the settlers, on the other hand, the government pointed out that the representational proportion had remained unchanged, since before the reform Southern Rhodesia had had 17 members, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland together 18 (11 + 7), and the proportion after the reform was still 29 to 30 (19 + 11), and that no change had occurred in the proportion of the representation of African interests (it had been 9 out of 35, and was now 15 out of 59).

The proportion of territorial representation did not change indeed. Nor did the proportion of members to those called "representatives of African interests". It is also true that the number of the latter had risen by nearly 70 per cent (from 9 to 15) and the African membership had increased twofold (from 6 to 12). What is more, if we compare the number of African members with that of the Europeans, even their proportion grew somewhat (the ratio of 6 to 29, that is 20 per cent, had risen to 12 to 47, that is nearly 25 per cent), but this was entirely inconsequential, because 12 against 47 are just as powerless to impose their will as are 6 against 29. And besides, only the 4 members elected by the Africans themselves can be considered genuine representatives of African interests, but not so the remaining 8 of the 12

who occupied their seats in parliament by the grace of the settlers and not owing to the confidence of Africans. And the share of these genuine African representatives, which had even thus far been insignificant (4 to 31), now was reduced further (4 to 55).

That the purpose of the "reform" was nothing else than to make it impossible altogether for African influence to grow within the Federation can be clearly seen from the new provision of the constitution that, if an African should ever get into the 44 "ordinary" members elected by the European electorate, then the number of African members was to be reduced by one and that of the European members was to be raised by one.

The constitutional reform bill was made public on May 22, 1957. After it was approved by the three territorial legislatures (in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland the African members refused to vote and left the meeting), the Federal Parliament passed it on July 31. The African Affairs Board objected to the Bill on the ground that it was based on racial discrimination and reduced the proportion of African representation, but the British government announced that the Bill was not discriminatory, presented it to the House of Commons, which passed it unchanged. (The Labour Party's amending motion was defeated by the Conservative majority.)

The new Federal Electoral Bill answering the revised constitution was presented to the British Parliament in September 1957 and passed its third reading on January 9, 1958. The African Affairs Board again raised objections, but again to no avail. The new constitution became law at the end of February.

#### *Federal Elections in 1958*

In the federal elections held under the new constitution in the autumn of 1958 three political parties entered the field: the United Federal Party, the Dominion Party and the Constitution Party. Their programmes differed mainly in their ideas about the future of the Federation. The two big parties pursued identical aims: to achieve independence for the Federal government by shaking off Britain's colonial rule. But they devised different tactics to attain this aim. The Dominion Party headed by WINSTON FIELD thought that, if it failed to obtain independence as a dominion by means of negotiations with the British government, then the Federation should — on the strength of the previous referendum of the settlers — proclaim independence unilaterally. ROY WELENSKY's United Federal Party, on the other hand, was against this idea as an open rebellion and hoped to win independence step by step, through negotiation and compromise with the British government. The Constitution Party, which promoted the ideas entertained by the Capricorn Africa Society, looked upon the British colonial authorities as the apostles of democratism, the protectors of Africans against the antidemocratic policies of the racist settlers, and therefore was against any change in the status of the Federation.

The elections returned to the Federal Parliament 46 members of the United Federal Party, 8 members of the Dominion Party, and one Independent.

Among these 55 members there were 47 Europeans and 8 Africans. The settlers elected 45 of the 47 members (44 on the ordinary roll and 1 on the common roll as European representative of African interests in Southern Rhodesia), and 2 were government-appointed members representing African interests in Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland. The 8 African members elected on the common roll to represent African interests were, just like the 2 appointed European members, affiliated with



the United Federal Party. Opposed to these 55 members of parliament were, as real representatives of African interests, the four African members who were elected to the Federal Parliament for this very purpose by the Africans themselves.

Since the situation of the dispossessed African population was improved neither by the constitutional reform nor by the new composition of the settlers' Federal Parliament emerging from the antidemocratic federal elections, the Africans were unaffected either by the changes in the constitution or by the 1958 federal elections. They were concerned by the settlers' quarrel only in the individual territories where they had to fight against them on several fronts at the same time. This was the case especially towards the late fifties when the African struggle for independence gained strength in all three federated territories as a result of the fact that the political situation came to a head (1959) and the conference called together by the British government to review the federal constitution was approaching (1960).

### *The Monckton Commission*

The British government appointed a commission under Lord MONCKTON to examine the situation in the Federation and to make recommendations for the review of the federal constitution at the 1960 conference. The very appointment of the commission already raised a storm. The British government invited the Labour opposition to nominate three representatives to the commission. In order to prevent the nomination of the opposition member responsible for colonial affairs, JAMES CALLAGHAN (who sharply criticized the government's Rhodesia policy), it stipulated that all members of the commission should be Privy Councillors. The Labour Party therefore refused to nominate members to serve in the commission.

And all major political organizations of Africans decided not only not to participate in the commission, but refused even to appear as witnesses before its members, since the government had appointed the commission only to recommend a partial review of the current constitution, and the commission was not supposed to suggest the break-up of the Federation, which had been demanded unanimously by the Africans from the very beginning.

The MONCKTON commission issued its report on October 11, 1960. It had come to the conclusion that the Federation could be maintained only on a voluntary basis. The recommendations it formulated in its report were, in its view, intended to ensure this voluntary acceptance:

1. Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland should be granted self-government, step by step, with an African majority.

2. In the Federal Parliament the Africans should have equal representation with the Europeans (that is six million Africans should have the same number of representatives as the 300,000 Europeans).<sup>1</sup>

3. The affairs concerning the everyday life of the population, which had thus far been within the competence of the Federal government and parliament, should be referred again to the territorial governments and parliaments.

4. Southern Rhodesia should change its racial policies, for otherwise the Federation of the three territories could not continue.

<sup>1</sup> The constitution in force at the time provided for 12 representatives of Africans against 47 European members.

5. All three individual territories of the Federation should be given the right to secession.

At the same time, however, the report was firmly against the dissolution of Federation, because it would bring with it "hardship, poverty and distress".

All in all eight of the twenty-five members of the commission signed the report without reservation. Three of the five African members made reservations to it, and two members submitted a minority report, stressing that the Federation imposed upon the Africans in 1953 must be dissolved.

An editorial in *The New York Times* of October 13, 1960, rightly pointed to the mixed nature of the report in about these terms:

"This programme is too radical for Federal Prime Minister Welensky's party, which refuses even to consider the possibility of secession, and it is not radical enough for most Africans, especially the Nyasalanders and Northern Rhodesians, who refuse to consider the possibility of maintaining Federation. The commission itself admits that broad strata of the population grumble about the present conditions, and they do so because they feel — and with reason — that the Federation is under the rule of the Southern Rhodesia white settlers."

The settler leaders of the Federal government and the three territorial governments were confidentially informed of the report more than two weeks before it was made public. On September 26 they met at WELENSKY's and expressed the opinion that the report was not worthy of consideration by the London conference in December. WELENSKY opined that the British government should be persuaded to dismiss the report since the commission was not authorized to recommend secession.

The right wing of the Southern Rhodesia settlers (the Dominion Party) was ready to put up with the secession of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, provided that Southern Rhodesia continued to be ruled by the whites after joining the Union of South Africa.

In all three territories the Africans unanimously stood up against the report. Their concurrent opinion was given expression by a leader of the National Democratic Party of Southern Rhodesia, JOSHUA NKOMO, who at that time told a news conference held by the Council on African Affairs in New York that the MONCKTON report was unacceptable: "The question cannot be settled by granting rights to a few Africans. All should be qualified to vote. Power cannot be left in the hands of a white minority."<sup>1</sup>

The reception of the report in Britain duly mirrored its heterogeneous nature. The Tory government just like the Labour opposition appraised it positively, but they did so for different reasons. MACMILLAN was satisfied that the report was strongly in favour of Federation. The government paper *Daily Mail* came to the conclusion that with acceptance of the recommendations of the report Central Africa might become the model of progressive and enlightened government. The Labour Party, quite the contrary, praised the report for its recommendation of secession from the Federation. Labour leader GAITSKELL said that at the forthcoming constitutional conference the Labourites would demand the confirmation of the right to secession. The party's colonial expert, CALLAGHAN, extolled the report as a "classic document". The Conservatives were not so consistent in their appraisals. The *Daily Telegraph*, for example, entertained doubts about it, pointing to the sad reality that the African nationalists did no longer rest satisfied with a sharing of power with the whites: if they were offered the whole cake — and that was what, though not in so many

<sup>1</sup> As for the reception given to the MONCKTON report in the individual territories, see below.



words, the right to secession offered — there would be no doubt that they would not settle for less. The paper stated that the government was mistaken if it expected the MONCKTON report to ensure the continued existence of the Federation, pointing out that the report emphasized the dilemma but did not resolve it. And finally, the liberals also offered varied opinions. The *News Chronicle*, while conceding that the whites could retain their rights only if they recognized the rights of Africans as well, admitted nevertheless that overall social changes and radical reforms were urgently needed, and therefore it was in favour of the right to secession, stressing at the same time that British control should be upheld for a while.

#### *The London Conference of December 1960*

The conference called to decide the future of the Federation was to be opened on December 5, but difficulties arose at once. The settler leaders — ROY WELENSKY, the Federal Prime Minister, and EDGAR WHITEHEAD, the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia — came to London well before the opening day with a view to exerting pressure on the British government. A few days later came the leaders of the independence movements of the three territories, HASTINGS BANDA, KENNETH KAUNDA and JOSHUA NKOMO. The white leaders wished to prevail upon the British government to ignore the MONCKTON report and prevent the disintegration of the Federation. WHITEHEAD took with him to the conference three of his African supporters (one chief and two trade-unionists) but did not allow the genuine representatives of the people (NKOMO and his associates) to be seated in the delegation of Southern Rhodesia. Fearing that the exclusion of NKOMO and his associates would prompt the African leaders to boycott the talks and to start discussions outside the conference, the British government persuaded WHITEHEAD to admit the NKOMO party as members of the delegation.

The African leaders were in a pessimistic mood. BANDA said he would not attend the conference if the British government, yielding to WELENSKY's pressure, failed to put on the agenda the question of the right to secession. KAUNDA and NKOMO backed up BANDA and made their participation dependent on whether the Southern and Northern Rhodesia constitutional conferences took place as scheduled in December.

The Africans' mood was further angered by the news coming from Blantyre that the local police on December 4 had tear-gassed a meeting of demonstration of the Malawi Congress Party and arrested two demonstrators.

In his opening speech at the conference Prime Minister MACMILLAN spoke of the necessity and possibility of partnership between Europeans and Africans. KAUNDA and NKOMO demanded that the separate talks on the constitutions of Southern Rhodesia, Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland should go on simultaneously with the conference on Federation. BANDA declared that he would leave the conference if it used delaying tactics against the demand for the right to immediate secession.

On December 9, when WHITEHEAD was explaining why Nyasaland would lose by seceding from the Federation, BANDA ostentatiously walked out of the conference and told newspapermen that the African leaders of the three territories were not interested in the discussion of a new federal constitution, because the Federation was "dead". KAUNDA and NKOMO did not follow him.

On the next week-end Prime Minister MACMILLAN invited KAUNDA, NKOMO and BANDA — together with MACLEOD, SANDYS and the settler ministers — to his country house at Chequers for informal talks. This meeting obviously convinced the

African leaders definitely that WELENSKY and WHITEHEAD stubbornly insisted on maintaining the settlers' rule. The next day, Monday, before the meeting was closed all three left the conference room because they saw no point in talking as long as WELENSKY and WHITEHEAD stuck by their policy. They were followed by all members of their delegations and all the chiefs present. KAUNDA said: "We have submitted our case to the British government, we have nothing else to do." BANDA said: "Our quarrel is not with the British government, but with the white settlers", and pointed out that the Federation was in reality ruled by Southern Rhodesia settlers.

When the Africans had withdrawn, the European delegations decided to continue discussing without them.

After this incident the British government announced that the constitutional conferences on Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia planned to open next day had been postponed. According to the official version the postponement became necessary because of the uncertainty caused by the remarks and attitudes of the African delegates during the Federal conference. The African leading politicians and representatives of the British government, however, continued to keep in touch. On the 13th BANDA had breakfast with MACMILLAN, and on the 14th he and KAUNDA paid separate calls to MACLEOD and talked with him in private. BANDA talked also with CALLAGHAN, the shadow Labour Foreign Secretary. Characteristic of the duplicity of the British statesmen is that in those very days they conversed with the rightist members of the African delegation, with the Nyasaland T. D. T. BANDA, a member of WELENSKY's party, and with HARRY NKUMBULA, who were both in favour of maintaining the Federation. Then MACMILLAN, MACLEOD and SANDYS met with WELENSKY and WHITEHEAD. It was obviously due to these talks that the British government changed its mind and decided that the separate constitutional conferences on Southern Rhodesia and Northern Rhodesia would take place as originally scheduled. The Southern Rhodesia conference opened on the 16th (the Northern Rhodesia conference started two days later), but now WHITEHEAD arbitrarily (with the tacit consent of MACMILLAN) expelled from the delegation NKOMO and SITHOLE, on whose participation the British government had still insisted during the federal conference. WHITEHEAD gave as his reason for the expulsion that NKOMO, by walking out of the federal conference, had forfeited his right to membership in the Southern Rhodesian delegation.

Following his expulsion NKOMO held a press conference where he announced that he would return to Southern Rhodesia to organize the struggle against the despotic rule of the white settlers.

On the other side, WELENSKY, at a dinner given in his honour by parliamentary reporters, stated with self-satisfaction that there was no question of breaking up the Federation, for the black people were unfit for the franchise.

The last meeting of the federal conference took place on the 17th. After an address by WELENSKY there followed SANDYS's brief summary and MACMILLAN's closing speech. The African leaders who had walked out earlier (with the exception of NKOMO) came to the meeting to hear MACMILLAN. The British Prime Minister stressed that the government would "study most carefully" the remarks heard at the conference and discuss them with representatives of the three territories. According to the official communiqué, the conference was only adjourned to reconvene next year, but its time would be fixed by the "five governments", "in the light of the progress made at the separate talks on the constitutions of Northern Rhodesia and Southern Rhodesia".

Afterwards SANDYS formulated the three principles which governed the British policy with regard to the future of the Federation: (1) Britain could fulfil her obli-



gations towards both Europeans and Africans only if they themselves co-operated "in the development of true partnership". (2) The Federal system did good to the three territories by promoting their economic and social development, and therefore Britain did not want anything to happen "which will slow down the rate of further economic advance". (3) For the Federal system to win the confidence and support of Africans, "Africans must be allowed to play a bigger part in the running of the country".

This statement made it clear to the Africans, who had come to this conference with the intention to "bury the Federation", that the British government still wanted to maintain it. On the other hand, in the decision of the conference "not to reconvene until after the new year", the Africans got what they wanted, because they had always held that, before talking about the future of Federation, the individual territorial constitutions should be revised in the spirit of African-controlled self-government.

BANDA took his leave by praising MACMILLAN and sending cables to Nyasaland to reassure his followers and asking them to refrain from violence. Next day, on his way home, he solemnly stated in Nairobi: "The Central African Federation is dead, it has only to wait for Macmillan to give permission for the burial."

#### *Beginnings of the Crisis of Federation*

In the first half of February SANDYS had talks in Salisbury with the WELENSKY government and African party leaders. On his return to London he stated his satisfaction with the result of his talks. "I think," he said, "we solved some extremely difficult and delicate questions, but we can't expect miracles from such a short trip."

After the talks with SANDYS, Federal Prime Minister WELENSKY told the Federal Parliament that SANDYS had handed him no ultimatum. He affirmed that as long as he remained at the head of the Federal government there would be no question of its dissolution, but he did not believe either that the British government would tolerate the breach of a treaty concluded within the rules of the constitution.

The African leaders accepted conditionally the draft constitution for Federation as a provisional measure which might mean a step forwards for Africans. They emphasized at the same time that the election rules should be changed, the Africans should obtain the majority in the legislative and executive organs alike, and the British troops should be taken out of the country.

The racist Federal government and its party, with WELENSKY as the leader, were opposed to the draft constitution laid down in the British government's White Paper. WELENSKY described it as a British challenge to the settlers and said that he would stick by his policies. He planned to dissolve the Federal Parliament and hold new elections, in which he would ask the electorate to vote him the right to have the Federation secede from Britain and proclaim independence. To secure the success of his scheme, he recalled 3,000 European reservists and made them go into intensive military training. He intended them together with 5,000 police and 2,000 troops, to be prepared to break the possible resistance of Africans. WELENSKY did not at all expect the British government to resort to armed intervention. True, MACLEOD told the Commons that the government held to the agreed plan, and SANDYS also spoke disapprovingly of WELENSKY's attitude, but the Federal Prime Minister knew well that he had allies in the British Parliament with whom the London government had to reckon. At a meeting of the House of Commons, which discussed the Central

African situation for three and a half hours, a group of 42 members of the government party endorsed WELENSKY's policy and bitterly attacked their own government. All of the 42 members possessed personal material interests in Rhodesia, just as did the high executives of the British South Africa Company who were sitting in the House of Lords, like Lord SALISBURY, Lord ROBINS and Lord MALVERN (the former Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia by the name of G. HUGGINS), or in the government itself, like JULIAN AMERY, the Minister of Aviation and an ex-director of the South Africa Company.

The majority of the settlers were members of WELENSKY's party and supported his government, but the Dominion Party of the ultra-rightist settlers advocated the joining of the Federation to the Union of South Africa, while the weak liberal opposition favoured the British government's scheme.

After the unsuccessful constitutional conference of December 1960 had been adjourned without date, efforts were being made for months on end to work out an acceptable draft constitution, but the efforts foundered because of the irreconcilable views.

The summer of 1961 brought decisive developments in the question of all three Central African countries.

In June 1961 the British government, yielding to the pressure of extreme elements of the Conservative Party, made changes in its own draft of the constitution for Northern Rhodesia, so that the revised draft did not ensure an African majority. KAUNDA, who had been willing to accept the previous draft, rejected the new version most categorically and called his followers to passive resistance. KAUNDA's call was undoubtedly for non-violent resistance, yet it came to clashes with the police in several places, resulting in 14 deaths and the banning of the United National Independence Party (U.N.I.P.) in Northern Rhodesia.

In the so-called referendum of July 26 in Southern Rhodesia (where only the white settlers were qualified to vote) two-thirds of the electorate voted for the new constitution, that is for Prime Minister WHITEHEAD and his party. The extreme rightist Dominion Party and the liberals, the Southern Rhodesia opposition of WELENSKY, were defeated. On the other hand, NKOMO, who had originally been in favour of the new constitution, turned against it under pressure from the majority of his party. The party boycotted the referendum and continued fighting against the new constitution and the racist policy of the WHITEHEAD government.

In the Nyasaland elections in August BANDA's party gained a sweeping victory, which encouraged him to demand more energetically the secession of Nyasaland from the Federation.

In November 1961 WELENSKY went to Lisbon, where he had talks with SALAZAR, as well as the Foreign Minister and the Minister for "Overseas Territories" of Portugal. On this occasion (in flat contradiction to his liberal phrases so often addressed to London) he openly expressed his solidarity with the outright imperialist policies of the fascist government of Portugal. "I have great admiration for Portugal's civilizing action in Africa", he said, "and for all that it has done and is doing both in Angola and in Mozambique. The criticism to which Portugal has been subjected is unjust."

In connection with the Katanga development<sup>1</sup> U THANT, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, demanded permission from the British government to have

<sup>1</sup> As is well known, WELENSKY dispatched troops from Northern Rhodesia to TSHOMBE's relief.



UN observers stationed in Northern Rhodesian territory adjoining the Congo to supervise the roads and airfields in the area. The British government, in concert with the Federal government, gave an evasive reply: it told the Secretary-General to make a visit to Salisbury and talk with the WELENSKY government. But WELENSKY, still before the delivery of the hypocritical reply, made a statement in which he answered U THANT's request on the merits: UN observers would not be permitted to enter the territory of the Federation, because there were no Rhodesian forces in Katanga, and even the UN operations in Katanga should be looked into, and only neutral Red Cross observers might possibly be allowed to check the frontier traffic. But the Red Cross assumed the point of view that the task in question was of an expressly political nature and accordingly was beyond its competence. Thus it was that neither UN observers nor U THANT went to Rhodesia.

The situation came to a head in February 1962. The developments had a twofold cause. In order to make the draft constitution for Northern Rhodesia acceptable to both sides (Africans and settlers), the British government again made some changes in the text, intending to present the new proposals at the constitutional conference on Northern Rhodesia to be held towards the end of February. The other cause of the growing tension was that the United Nations appointed a five-member special mission to visit Southern Rhodesia and examine how things stood there with regard to the right of self-determination. WELENSKY said that he was prepared to fight by force of arms for the Federation. WHITEHEAD also affirmed that he was ready to use force to prevent the UN Visiting Mission from entering Southern Rhodesia, and that in case the British government would hand the government of Northern Rhodesia over to the Africans, then Southern Rhodesia would secede from the Federation; he expressed the hope at the same time that London would not allow the Federation to break up and so there would be no need to use armed force for its survival.

For the time being, until the publication of the new constitutional proposals, KAUNDA adopted a wait-and-see attitude, but BANDA spoke in a combative spirit and openly threatened rebellion in case the British government would not consent to Nyasaland's secession.

In February the Northern Rhodesia settlers attempted a plot to kidnap British Governor E. D. HONE. The government was compelled to order a reinforced police squad to guard the Governor's house.

The Northern Rhodesia branch of WELENSKY's party organized sabotage acts and formed "action committees" of 30 to 40 members and trained them for armed service in support of WELENSKY's policy.

The Federal Minister of Law, JULIAN GREENFIELD, said that, if other means should prove insufficient to save the Federation, "hard action by unconstitutional means" would become inevitable.

The internal opposition of the Conservative Party in London also anxiously waited for the publication of the draft constitution for Northern Rhodesia. They expected to succeed in prevailing upon MACMILLAN to dismiss MACLEOD and forcing him to prevent the Africans from coming to power.

On February 27, at the Northern Rhodesia constitutional conference in London, MACLEOD outlined the new version of the constitution which, however, satisfied neither the white settlers nor the Africans.

The first two days of March again found WELENSKY in London talking with MACMILLAN, MAUDLING and SANDYS to dissuade the British government from enforcing its scheme. On the eve of his departure for London, the Federal government had ordered the recently recalled white reservists to be demobilized. WELENSKY obviously

wanted this step to demonstrate his peaceful intentions, but upon arrival in London he said that if the British government continued to hold to the proposed constitution for Northern Rhodesia, he would not cease to fight for the maintenance of Federation. The conversations brought no change in the position of either WELENSKY or the British cabinet.

The negotiations took place in a polite manner; and moreover, while passionate discussions went on, the British government made a conciliatory gesture to the Federation: it granted the Federal Government a loan of £5 million to finance its economic development programme.

Both on March 2 in the evening, before leaving London, and the next day, upon arrival in Salisbury, WELENSKY gave a press conference. On these occasions he made a rude assault against the British government which, in his view, had betrayed the Federation by agreeing to its dissolution.

At the March 6 emergency meeting of the Federal Parliament WELENSKY again accused the British government of breaking its word and undermining the Federation. He referred to the 1957 agreement between the two governments for considering "a programme for the attainment of such a status as would enable the Federation to become eligible for full membership in the Commonwealth". On this basis he demanded that the Federation might receive dominion status and accordingly independence.

In the course of March WELENSKY again went to London, where the Commonwealth conference was held at that time, and handed MACMILLAN new proposals for a solution of the Federation's problem. He recommended that Northern Rhodesia be divided in three parts: the Copperbelt with a connecting zone should be joined to Southern Rhodesia under the settlers' rule, while the western part (Barotseland) and the north-eastern woodland should be separated and placed under African government. This project, however, was acceptable neither to the British government nor to the capitalist mining interests, nor to the Africans, not to mention that it would have stirred up a real storm in the United Nations.

The Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia, WHITEHEAD, who stayed in London towards the end of February and in March and had talks with the British government, also came out with a new plan, which was nearly analogous with the British conception — if it did not originate with the British government. This plan provided that the three federated territories should become separate states, and the three sovereign governments should agree by negotiation for their co-operation in economic and administrative matters.

NKOMO, who also was in London at the time, gave a news conference where, speaking of the talks between the British government and the two Prime Ministers of the Rhodesian settlers, said that the Africans would not accept constitutions and agreements arrived at between Europeans.

While WELENSKY talked with the British ministers, his ultra-conservative allies in the British Parliament launched an attack on the policy of MACMILLAN and his colleagues. One of the most influential members of the Conservative Party, Lord SALISBURY,<sup>1</sup> in the House of Lords characterized the Conservative Colonial Secretary, MACLEOD, as an "extremely unscrupulous politician" and, in protest against the government's African policy, resigned from the chairmanship of the local branch of

<sup>1</sup> SALISBURY was one of those Conservatives who at the time had joined CHURCHILL and EDEN in opposing CHAMBERLAIN's policy of appeasement towards HITLER.



his party. Another Conservative, Lord SELBORNE, wrote in a newspaper article that MACLEOD's name "smells badly from one end of Africa to the other". Extreme Conservative members of parliament presented against MACLEOD a motion of no confidence with 98 signatures. (After the party leadership issued a statement censuring SALISBURY, twenty of the signers withdrew their endorsement.)

This time again nothing came of WELENSKY's renewed negotiations and of the ultra-conservative efforts to knock MACLEOD out of the government. MACMILLAN, after his talks with WELENSKY, held a cabinet meeting, where the vast majority backed up MACLEOD and his policy. The official communiqué said that the British government was willing also in the future to examine the Federal government's views and suggestions regarding the Northern Rhodesia constitution, but only within the framework and in the spirit of the MACLEOD scheme.

Nevertheless, the tense situation induced Prime Minister MACMILLAN to take away the affairs of the Central African Federation from the Ministry for Commonwealth Relations and the Colonial Office (MAUDLING and SANDYS) and to refer them to a new-established department under Home Secretary BUTLER. The new office started functioning on March 19, and towards the end of March BUTLER already called to London the British Governors of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland and the High Commissioner for Southern Rhodesia to discuss with them the problems of the three countries.

Early in April the British government had to receive in London the five-member UN Mission which was appointed to go to Southern Rhodesia to study the situation there, but which was denied entry by both WELENSKY and WHITEHEAD.

#### *Elections in March-April 1962*

The African leaders demanded that the future of the Federation should be decided by a referendum involving the entire population. In response WELENSKY, on March 8, tendered the resignation of his government, dissolved the Federal Parliament and called new federal elections. He explained his move on the ground that the British government, breaking its pledge to the settlers, was yielding to African pressure and willing to allow Africans to seize power by breaking up the Federation. He said that he expected the elections to bring him the mandate of the electorate to defend the Federation in its actual form by all manner of means.

In all three territories the African parties boycotted the federal elections because only an insignificant number of Africans were qualified to vote. But a great part of the settlers received the calling of the elections with dislike. FIELD's Dominion Party, which had always been opposed to WELENSKY's party and government, refused to participate in the new elections. This extreme rightist party, which for the most part was composed of settlers sympathizing with the reactionary racist policy of the South African regime, did not want the Federation to continue. Their idea was that Southern Rhodesia, relying on the Republic of South Africa, should proclaim its independence and sever its ties with the two other countries of the Federation.

But a split occurred also inside the government party. Some members, headed by Prime Minister WHITEHEAD of Southern Rhodesia, reckoning with the possibility that all three territories would sooner or later win independence, thought it necessary to revise the Federal constitution so as to ensure that an independent Southern Rhodesia maintained close economic contacts with the rich mining areas of an equally independent Northern Rhodesia. However, the elections called by WELENSKY,

who just wanted to keep up the existing constitution, delayed the realization of this very scheme.

Dominion Party members and other right-wing elements of the settlers met in Salisbury on March 14 and decided to form a new, united opposition party. The new political organization, called the Rhodesian Front, was opposed to both WELENSKY and WHITEHEAD, but stayed away from the April elections and was busy preparing for the parliamentary elections to be held in Southern Rhodesia next October.

It was in this complicated situation that MACMILLAN entrusted the affairs of the Central African Federation to Minister of State and Home Secretary BUTLER.

During the electoral campaign WELENSKY delivered impudent, unrestrained speeches. On April 14, for example, he flew to Limbi near Blantyre in Nyasaland. At the airport he was received by BANDA, who told him that the Federation linking Nyasaland to the Rhodesias was dead and everybody knew it. But WELENSKY did not mind. When at the meeting he was asked questions about the practices of racial discrimination, he answered disdainfully: "It is obvious my questioner is a political child. I want to say to the loudmouthed gentlemen who think they can frighten Europeans that they are wasting their time, I am a Rhodesian and an African — a white Rhodesian and African — and I have as much right to stay in this part of the world as anyone." When he emphasized that the Federal budget of £8 million a year was an inevitable safety measure to maintain the Federation, the twenty Africans attending the meeting got up and left.

Two days later, on April 16, WELENSKY was given a luncheon by white settlers in Ndola, the centre of the Northern Rhodesian mining district. In his speech there he responded to the remarks made by ADLAI STEVENSON, the chief United States delegate to the United Nations in New York. STEVENSON had levelled the charge that the European settlers fought against African representation because they were afraid of losing their privileges, and he had voiced the known democratic principle "Africa to the Africans". WELENSKY vilipended the American statesman, branding his speech as "a classical example of political insanity", and took the United States to task for its racism and the oppression of 17 million Negroes; he then censured also the independent Asian and African countries, accusing them of propagandizing democracy for other countries and oppressing their peoples at home. He referred to the "dictatorial regimes" of Ghana, Guinea, Egypt and Indonesia, the "absolute monarchy" of Morocco, and the "primitive feudalism" still prevailing in Ethiopia. He said that the principle "one man, one vote" had led to "record poverty and privations" in many African countries and the principle "Africa to the Africans" would bring with it destruction and economic ruin in the Federation.

The elections were held on April 27. Strange "elections" they were indeed. The Africans and about half of the settler population boycotted them.

As a matter of fact, elections took place in only 15 of the 59 constituencies, the rest elected WELENSKY's men to parliament unopposed. Of the more than eight million African inhabitants of the Federation only five thousand had the right to vote. Altogether 72 of these Africans (36 out of three million Nyasalanders) went to the poll. In the 15 constituencies where the choice was between two or more candidates the number of qualified voters was all in all 28,091.

The colonial administration of Northern Rhodesia banned the gathering of more than two persons in five African urban areas, and instructed the local authorities to apply similar measures and the police to use any necessary means to maintain



order. Nevertheless, clashes between different African parties resulted in eight dead and a number of injured, and over thirty Africans were arrested and imprisoned on the charge of "participating in riots" or for murder.

The election results could be foreseen. WELENSKY's party obtained 55 of the 59 seats; 40 candidates were unopposed and 11 others were elected; in addition, the two appointed Africans in Nyasaland and the two Europeans appointed by the Governors of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland to "represent African interests" also came from the government party.

On May 4 WELENSKY formed his government, with himself as Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. He took into the government two Africans as under-secretaries. GODWIN LEWANIKA, a descendant of the Barotse royal family, was appointed Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

The British government, which could not be deceived by this travesty of elections, was well aware that the Federation in its actual form could not continue, so it intended to change policy. It contemplated formulating a scheme for keeping the three countries together in a looser association. The British Minister of State in charge of Central African affairs, BUTLER, made a two-week trip to the Federation to find out, through talks with leaders of the major parties, what minimum concessions should be made to get them to accept some compromise solution.

In a speech at Dar as Salaam on April 29 JULIUS NYERERE warned WELENSKY not to try to maintain European domination over the Federation by employing "Algerian tactics", which would of necessity meet with a resistance similar to the situation in Algeria. At the same time he called upon the British government to prevent an "Algerian solution" of the Federation issue.

### *Deepening Crisis of the Federation*

Minister of State BUTLER, before his trip to Africa, told the British Parliament that the ways must be found to maintain an association of the three territories, because it was economically very profitable to each of them. He admitted that African political leaders demanded the break-up of the Federation or at least wanted to change the existing federal system under the white settlers' government. "It is quite clear, especially in relation to Nyasaland", he said, "that any association which is to last must be acceptable to the territories concerned and based on the goodwill of their peoples. What I have in mind is to start as quickly as possible some exploratory work into the various aspects of the future relationships of the territories." The task was to find a solution making possible mutually advantageous co-operation between Europeans and Africans. But what was needed for this end was not the appointment of new commissions of inquiry, but the hearing of expert advisers.

At the Salisbury airport BUTLER was received by a group of African demonstrators: "To hell with Federation. Break it up. Butler, you are a sell-out. Go home. We Africans don't want you."

On arrival BUTLER said that his visit would serve to build up a new form of federation, but there was no need to hurry, the task was not expected to be solved before several months or even a year.

First he called on the Prime Minister of Southern Rhodesia and the Federal Prime Minister and conversed with them. While he was talking with WHITEHEAD a clash occurred in a suburb of Salisbury between two rivaling groups of African trade unionists (one of which recognized the neutral African trade-union centre,

the other a so-called "free" trade-union council of Western orientation). The police and troops which the colonial administration sent against the brawlers killed an African and wounded several others.

BUTLER went to see the European politicians personally, and sent word to the African leaders that he was ready to receive them if they wanted to explain their views. The leaders of the party of the Southern Rhodesian Africans, the Zimbabwe African People's Union (Z.A.P.U.), refused the invitation. NKOMO took the view that there was no point in talking to BUTLER, since the British government had already decided not to change the Southern Rhodesia constitution revised to suit the settlers until the indefinitely postponed new elections.

On May 21 the U.N.I.P. handed BUTLER a memorandum demanding the dissolution of the Federation and independence for Northern Rhodesia, firmly opposing any scheme to divide up the country. After 75 minutes' talk with BUTLER, KAUNDA said to newspapermen: "Our opinion still remains the same and nothing has happened to make us feel any different. The struggle is not yet over . . . Our document serves a single objective: independence for Zambia."

Back in London BUTLER reported to the Commons on his African trip and talks, which in his opinion had made way for a thorough investigation into the prospects of the Federation. In reply to a question he said that the government had noted that the majority Malawi Party and government in Nyasaland were against remaining in the Federation. But before the British government made its final decision it should consider what consequences this secession would entail for the future of Nyasaland and what kind of relationships Nyasaland would maintain with the other two countries. The British government would do everything in its power to ensure a certain form of economic association between them.

The British government had pointed out several times that the destiny of the Federation was Britain's internal affair, and neither other states nor the United Nations should interfere with it. It deemed it necessary to voice this view quite contrary to the UN Charter because, on the one hand, it got to know that for a time WELENSKY was having talks with the South African government and the Congo separatist TSHOMBE, that BANDA was parleying with the Portuguese government and, furthermore, that the question of Southern Rhodesia had been put on the agenda of the United Nations General Assembly and UN Secretary-General U THANT was going to visit London in early July.

By August the situation in the Federation had become critical.

On August 15 the only African member of WELENSKY's Federal government, Under-Secretary ZENGGEZA SAVANHU, tendered his resignation. He gave as a reason that the Federal government failed to carry out its proclaimed policy of partnership. "I believe", he said, "the situation in Southern Rhodesia is on the verge of exploding and I wish to identify myself with the African people."

The situation was "on the verge of exploding" not only in Southern Rhodesia but in the other two territories of the Federation, too. The legislature composed of white settlers in Southern Rhodesia invested Prime Minister WHITEHEAD with full power to break down the Z.A.P.U., the African independence movement led by NKOMO. In Nyasaland BANDA's party, which at the recent elections gained a sweeping victory, was clamouring more and more persistently for full self-government and immediate secession from the Federation. In Northern Rhodesia the crucial elections were still to come, but it could be predicted that KAUNDA's party, the U.N.I.P., which was commonly known to enjoy the support of the majority of the population, would also come out victorious, and Northern Rhodesia, just like Nyasa-



land, would insist on independence and secession from the Federation. The British government attempted to prevent this: it set up a committee to redistrict the country for the elections, in the hope that by creating constituencies favourable to the opposition parties it might influence the election results and prevent the victory of KAUNDA's party.

Towards the end of August the British government said that only the British Parliament was entitled to permit the secession of any member of the Federation, that neither the Federal government nor the individual territorial governments had the right to so decide. WELENSKY then outbade the British government: he was claiming that a member country could withdraw only if the British Parliament, the Federal government and all three territorial governments gave their consent.

The situation became especially grave in early December. Towards the end of November there was closed the London conference on the Nyasaland constitution, where BANDA gained a victory. It became certain that Nyasaland would in the near future obtain the right to secede from the Federation. And in the middle of December elections were to be held in both Rhodesias. On December 4 the Labour Party moved a proposal in parliament, demanding that the Federation be dissolved and new constitutions drawn up for the three territories to ensure their independence under African majority rule. Parliament rejected the motion by 261 votes to 180. BUTLER summed up his view as follows: "Whatever changes there may be, and they may well be radical, one aim we should have is to see that those benefits which have accrued from past associations are preserved." The spokesman for the Labour Party on foreign policies, HEALEY, stressed that the forthcoming elections in Southern Rhodesia were "meaningless" since the only party representing the African majority was banned.

The African population boycotted the elections held in Southern Rhodesia on December 14, because the choice was only between two settler parties. WHITEHEAD's United Federal Party, which was willing to make at least some concession to the Africans in order to preserve the white settlers' rule, was defeated by a large margin at the hands of WINSTON FIELD's Rhodesian Front, which advocated complete racial segregation on the South African model.

At the same time Northern Rhodesia obtained the first African majority government with the participation of KAUNDA and NKUMBULA.

This turn of events put WELENSKY and his United Federal Party in an awkward position. They still controlled the Federal government, they had control of the government apparatus, the power-enforcement machine, the armed forces, the air force, the police, the railways, etc. In the Federal Parliament 58 out of 59 members belonged to their party (since the latest federal elections had been boycotted not only by the Africans but also by the Rhodesian Front, which concentrated all its energy upon the coming Southern Rhodesia elections). At the same time this federal "government party" played the role of an insignificant minority opposition in the three territorial parliaments.

The British government was also in a predicament. After BANDA and KAUNDA took over, it would obviously be impossible to prevent Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia for a long time from winning independence and seceding. And if this was an accomplished fact, there was danger that Southern Rhodesia, left alone under FIELD and his party, would also insist on independence for the country under the white settlers' rule and strive for close co-operation with South Africa and with Portugal's two colonies in southern Africa, Angola and Mozambique.

WELENSKY convened the Federal Parliament for December 20 to discuss the British governments' consent to the secession of Nyasaland from the Federation. He was

so furious that he falsely accused the British government of having concentrated troops in Nairobi last February with the intention of occupying the Federation territory by armed forces and imposing its policy in favour of African majority rule. Next day Lord ALPORT, the British High Commissioner for the Federation, branded WELENSKY's accusation as absolutely unfounded. He admitted that troops had been dispatched to Nairobi in spring the year before, but he denied that the British government had ever intended to use force against the Federation.

The first thing the new Southern Rhodesian government taking office with FIELD at its head in mid-December was to lift the restriction on the freedom of movement of 117 members of the Zimbabwe African People's Union. (Another 100 members of the banned party, NKOMO among them, remained under the ban.) Among the 117 there were three Europeans, one of them an assistant university professor, TERENCE RANGER, a civil rights leader. WELENSKY gave expression to his indignation over FIELD's conciliatory move by having the Federal government pass a decision on Professor RANGER's expulsion from the Federation.

When on December 19 the British government recognized the right of Nyasaland to secession, WELENSKY charged the British government with perfidy, referring to its secret pledge made back in 1953, when the Federation was brought into existence, that any major change in the Federal constitution would be made only with the consent of the Federal government and all three territorial governments. To WELENSKY's charge London replied in a White Paper issued in February 13, 1963. It stated that no such promise had ever been made, because although the British government wished the three territories to unite in a strong and lasting association, it could not have guaranteed that the Federation should never be dissolved, and Britain would violate her commitment to the Nyasaland Protectorate if she ignored the will of the majority of the population which wanted to secede from the Federation. "No trace of such a pledge can be found in any public document, in any contemporaneous announcement, or in the Constitution itself", he said. The White Paper introduced supporting evidence from the material of the one-time confidential talks.

Thereupon WELENSKY, in a statement made on February 17, again accused the British government of having broken its word. And former Federal Prime Minister HUGGINS, one of the signers of the Federal Act, told the Federal Senate that in the absence of such a pledge he would never have signed the Federation instrument.

Around the middle of February BUTLER again visited the Federation to talk with European and African politicians. WELENSKY said he would agree to the secession of Nyasaland only if the British government gave assurances that the two Rhodesias would continue to be politically united, but the British government was no longer in a position to do so. During the talks with KAUNDA at Lusaka, BUTLER had convinced himself that the African coalition government of Northern Rhodesia was determined to secede. On the other hand, the head of the settler government of Southern Rhodesia, W. FIELD, told BUTLER that it would be easier to secure proper economic co-operation with Northern Rhodesia if the political ties so hateful and unacceptable to the Africans could be broken.

On his return to London BUTLER reported to the British Parliament on his talks in Salisbury and Lusaka. He made known the points of view of WELENSKY, KAUNDA and FIELD, and again repudiated WELENSKY's charge of British perfidy. His speech made it clear that the British government had acquiesced in the disintegration of the Federation and was now trying only to ensure that the arrangement was put through by peaceful means, without blood being shed, and by maintaining close economic ties between the three countries.



On the part of the Parliamentary Labour opposition HEALEY commented on the report. He stated that the British government had been double-dealing when establishing the Federation: it had promised the settlers in secret that the Federation would not be dissolved, and had made a public pledge to the African population of the Protectorates (Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland) that "H.M. Government" would take care of the protection of their interests. HEALEY demanded that Northern Rhodesia be allowed immediately to secede from the Federation and granted complete independence, and that Southern Rhodesia should win independence only when it would have an African majority government.<sup>1</sup>

BUTLER also told the Commons that he would soon resume his talks in London with political leaders of the Federation. In the middle of March WELENSKY, FIELD and KAUNDA went to London, and BUTLER started separate talks with them in the last days of the month. KAUNDA's delegation demanded ultimatumwise that Northern Rhodesia, just like Nyasaland, should be given the right to secession and that the constitution should be revised accordingly.

### *The London Talks in March-April 1963*

On March 25 KAUNDA's delegation broke up the meeting and released a statement stressing that this step was needed because BUTLER was unwilling expressly to recognize the right of Northern Rhodesia to secede from the Federation.

WELENSKY arrived in London the same day and made an important statement on this occasion. He said for the first time in public that he would not try to keep the Rhodesias together by force, because that was impossible, and that he would make use of the Federal troops only in case law and order would be in jeopardy.

On March 26 BUTLER first talked with FIELD, and then with WELENSKY and his delegation for a full two hours.

On March 29 at last the British government put into clear words that not only Nyasaland but all three member countries of the Federation had the right to secession.

This decision of the British government was made public by BUTLER at a press conference. "None of the territories can be kept in the Federation against its will", he said. Therefore the government accepted the principle that the right to secede should be given to the territory which so desired. This was the only way, he added, to start useful talks between the three territories on the maintenance of their economic contacts established within the Federation (mainly in the field of communication and energy supply), which the British government considered to be possible also after the termination of political relations. BUTLER said also that Northern Rhodesia had already applied for release from the Federation, and that this right should be granted to Southern Rhodesia, too. He emphasized that the British government was seeking a solution for the three territories to enter into relations of a new type with one another, and invited the territorial governments concerned, first of all those of Northern and Southern Rhodesia, to endeavour to reach this solution by joint efforts.

<sup>1</sup> On March 2, 1963, the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, reporting on the meeting of the British Parliament, made the ironical remark that if HEALEY were in power he would probably be as wary of the settler government of Southern Rhodesia as was BUTLER ... We already know today that the Swiss paper proved a good prophet!

WELENSKY, whom BUTLER in the morning had informed of the decision to be made public at the evening press conference, was foaming with rage, accusing the British government of "betrayal", of "capitulation to the threats of Pan-Africanism". Consequently, to him, he said, there was nothing left but to refuse co-operation in the liquidation of Federation until the "vital interests" of its individual members had been safeguarded.

After the talks between BUTLER and WELENSKY both were scheduled to have luncheon with MACMILLAN, but WELENSKY was so enraged that he walked out on BUTLER and failed to see MACMILLAN as well.

The Labour opposition in parliament approved the government's point of view, while the extreme right wing of the Conservative Party spoke about a crisis of British policy. One of the Tory M.P.s, PATRICK WALL, said that this decision "will make every white man in Africa believe Britain is no longer interested in his future".

KAUNDA stated with satisfaction that Northern Rhodesia would make use of the right to secede. "We have been fighting this Federation for ten years. It is quite likely the first thing we shall do is to set up committees of experts to look into the mechanics of dismantling the Federation", he said.

The ultra-rightist settlers of Southern Rhodesia also welcomed the death sentence dealt out to the Federation. Prime Minister FIELD stated that the decision entitled also Southern Rhodesia to independence, and so he would refuse to talk about the liquidation of the Federation until his country's independence was guaranteed.

At the meeting of the Federal Parliament on April 6 WELENSKY, giving account of the London decision, again accused the British government of "weakness", "double-dealing" and "fraudulence". He stressed that responsibility for the disintegration of the Federation rested entirely on London, since the British government, by its "policy of appeasement" out-topping even the Munich Agreement, was betraying the interests of the "white man" and the moderate Africans and made way for racial insanity (!) in all Africa. Finally he said that if Southern Rhodesia should not receive the appropriate assurances for its white officialdom and population, his government would refuse to participate in the preparation of arrangements to obliterate the Federation.

### *Disintegration of the Federation*

Between June 28 and July 3, 1963, representatives of the United Kingdom, the Federation and the governments of the two Rhodesias (Nyasaland was represented by observers only) met at Victoria Falls, the same place where the demand for the establishment of federation had been enunciated 15 years before, and adopted a decision on the dissolution of the Federation. December 31, 1963, was set as the date for termination. The decision was approved by the British government on December 17. The Federal Parliament had been dissolved before that date, on December 10.

The Central African Federation ceased to exist on December 31, 1963.

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*The Post-war Policy of British Imperialism in Northern Rhodesia*

When taking over the administration of Northern Rhodesia from the British South Africa Company in 1924, the British government had made a solemn vow that it would always give priority to the interests of the Africans. In contrast to this professed principle, over about a half century the Africans had been represented neither in the Legislative Council nor in the Executive Council. The 15-member Legislative Council presided over by the British Governor included only colonial officials and "unofficial" members appointed by the Governor from among the European settlers. In 1938 a representative of African interests was added to the Council, but his "representative" was also nominated by the Governor from among the settlers, without consulting the Africans. In 1948 the British government carried out a "constitutional reform" creating seats for four representatives of African interests. The Governor appointed two of them from among the European settlers and two from among the Africans who were agreeable to him. At the same time the number of ex-officio members was increased by one and that of unofficial members by two. By virtue of the 1948 reform the Executive Council was composed of 11 members: 7 ex-officio and 4 unofficial members, one of the latter being appointed by the Governor to represent African interests.

As appears from these facts, the priority of African interests remained a principle which found no application in practice after either the 1938 or the 1948 reform. The British imperialists never took this principle seriously, but in the years preceding the war and in the early post-war years they at least held to it on one important point — they did not yield to the pressure of the racist Southern Rhodesia settlers who were striving to annex Northern Rhodesia. By imposing Federation later they abandoned this position and scrapped the principle of the priority of African interest definitively.

From the late forties onwards the British imperialists, and part of the settlers with them, enunciated a new principle: the concept of "partnership". The imperialists and the settlers interpreted this "partnership" differently in the different colonies. But even where they were most compliant,<sup>1</sup> they did not go beyond offering the Africans (the huge majority of the population) equal participation with the settlers (at most two per cent of the population) in the Legislative and Executive Councils. But Northern Rhodesia was offered nothing of the sort. The leader of the English settlers, ROY WELENSKY, in 1952, when speaking in the federal debate of the Legis-

<sup>1</sup> See the application of partnership in Tanganyika, Vol. IV, ch. XIV.



lative Council, said that partnership could not always mean participation on a fifty-fifty basis. In his terms this meant that one partner (the insignificant minority) must predominate over the other (the Africans).

In July 1954 the Northern Rhodesia Legislative Council accepted the so-called MOFFAT Resolutions, the first two of which read as follows:

"1. The objective of policy in Northern Rhodesia must be to remove from each race the fear that the other might dominate for its own racial benefit, and to move forward from the present system of racial representation in the territorial legislature towards a franchise with no separate representation for the races.

"2. Until that objective can be fully achieved, a period of transition will remain during which special arrangements in the Legislative and Executive Councils must continue to be made, so as to ensure that no race can use either the preponderance of its numbers or its more advanced stages of development to dominate the other for its own racial benefit."<sup>1</sup>

The British government having espoused the MOFFAT Resolutions, it would have followed logically that the Legislative Council and the Executive Council should be constituted at par, ensuring the same number of seats to Africans as to the settlers; this would have been far from a democratic solution, but would have met the requirement laid down in point 2 of the MOFFAT Resolutions. However, the British government acted differently, introducing a new "constitutional reform" the same year (1954). It increased the number of the nominated African members of the Legislative Council from two to four, the number of settler representatives from ten to twelve, and reduced that of ex-officio members from ten to eight. Thus, under the 1954 Constitution the Legislative Council was composed of 8 ex-officio members (Europeans), 12 unofficial members (European settlers), 2 European members appointed to represent African interests, and 4 nominated African members.

The only change in the composition of the Executive Council was that the number of ex-officio members was cut from seven to five.

The British government, which continued to pose as the protector of African interests, thought it had complied with the MOFFAT Resolutions, considering that the ex-officio members, the nominated Africans and the European members representing the African interests outnumbered the representatives elected by the settlers. The Africans, however, saw in the 1954 "reform" a new proof that the colonial administration, on the pretence of protecting the interests of Africans, promoted the settlers' interests by all means; and they well knew also that the government-appointed representatives, whether European or African, could not be relied upon.

*The Beginnings of the Independence Movement in Northern Rhodesia. The Activities of the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress*

Up to 1958 the only organization of the African population of Northern Rhodesia was the Federation of African Welfare Societies. Its direction was taken over by GODWIN LEWANIKA<sup>2</sup> in 1948, and it was he who, that same year, founded the first

<sup>1</sup> PHILIP MASON, *Year of Decision: Rhodesia and Nyasaland*, Oxford, 1960, p. 61.

<sup>2</sup> GODWIN LEWANIKA, son of Barotse King LEWANIKA by one of his court-ladies, was born at Luangwa in 1907. He studied at university in the Union of South Africa and in England. From 1925 till 1935 he was an office employee of the Northern Rhodesia public utility works. In 1935 he became private secretary to Barotse King YETA III (successor of LEWANIKA). As an attendant of the king he went to London and remained there for a time. Returning home in 1941, he worked first with a mining company (Rhokana Corporation) and later in the colonial administration.

political party, the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress (A.N.C.). As President of the Congress, he at first carried on strongly anti-British propaganda and thus gained popularity with the African masses, but his political activity soon declined, and so did his reputation.

In 1951 the direction of the A.N.C. passed into the hands of HARRY NKUMBULA.<sup>1</sup>

In the years 1952 to 1954 the principal activity of the Congress was directed against Federation. At the same time the party succeeded in organizing a boycott of the shops which discriminated against Africans. (Africans were not permitted to enter the shop premises with the white customers, but were served through windows cut in the walls.)

In February 1952 the Congress set up a Supreme Action Council to direct the struggle against Federation. The Attorney-General of the colony, being informed of this action, warned the two African members of the Legislative Council that "the Government will not hesitate to use its powers to deal with disorders" planned by the Congress. Thereupon the Supreme Action Council on February 27 issued a statement which, in reply to the warning, emphasized that no disorders were intended by the Congress, only a protest action, which had been provoked by the British and Northern Rhodesia governments themselves which disregarded the unanimous opposition of the Africans against Federation. At the same time the Council decided to send a five-member delegation under NKUMBULA to London to express to the British government the protest of the peoples of Northern Rhodesia against Federation.

During his stay in London NKUMBULA (together with HASTINGS BANDA who lived there) drafted a document outlining the programme of a future democratic constitution of the three countries being forced into Federation. The document was later published as a pamphlet. The independence movement of Northern Rhodesia regarded it as its own programme.<sup>2</sup>

In August 1952 a leading functionary of the colonial administration (the "Secretary for Native Affairs") called a conference of tribal chiefs. He tried to prevail on them to withhold their support from the Congress and not to stand up against Federation. Most of the chiefs, however, refused to comply.

In April 1953 a petition with the signatures of 120 chiefs of Northern Rhodesia was sent to the Queen in London, requesting her help in blocking the plan of Federation; of course, the call went unheeded.

The activity of the A.N.C. became particularly intense from 1953 onwards, when KENNETH KAUNDA<sup>3</sup> took over the functions of Secretary-General.

In the autumn of 1953, when the elections to the Federal Parliament were held, the Congress decided to participate in the elections, because it thought that the African absence from the poll would make it possible for the Federal Parliament to modify the Constitution so that the Governor might appoint to the Federal Parlia-

<sup>1</sup> HARRY MWAANGA NKUMBULA was born in the Namwala district of Northern Rhodesia in 1916. He went first to the Namwala Methodist mission school and later to the teachers' training school of the Kafue mission. After that he taught at the Namwala school. Later he studied education and economics at Makerere College in Uganda, and then pursued his studies in London on an English scholarship. In 1950 he returned to Northern Rhodesia and engaged in politics.

<sup>2</sup> For the full text, see the Annex to KAUNDA, *Zambia Shall Be Free*, London, 1962.

<sup>3</sup> KENNETH DAVID KAUNDA was born in 1924 at the village of Lubwa near Chinsali in the north of the country. He was the son of an African Protestant missionary and his mother was a teacher. He went to the local mission school and the Munali secondary school. Later he taught for four years at the Lubwa school and then in Mufulira. From 1949 onwards he was an interpreter of the colonial administration and joined the African National Congress.



ment such Africans to represent African interests who would follow his every instruction.

In the second half of 1953 the Congress leadership resolved to launch a newspaper. Failing the necessary means, the paper was published in mimeographic form. The first issue came out in October 1953. It was intended to appear every month, but the second issue in November was also the last one. The colonial authorities arrested KAUNDA and NKUMBULA for unlicensed publishing. As there was evidence that the publication of the paper had been notified to the postal administration, they were released but the paper was banned pending further notice. Since no "further notice" came, the Congress leaders asked British M.P.s to forward their complaint to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and thus they managed to obtain the publishing licence.

The Congress was the target of ceaseless molestation and persecution on the part of the colonial authorities. In August 1954, when NKUMBULA and KAUNDA flew to Salisbury to talk with four federal M.P.s of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, upon arrival at the airport they were served an order stating that, under the Deportation of Aliens Act, they — as "alien natives" — must leave Southern Rhodesia within one hour of the service of the order.

Early in 1955 the colonial authorities arrested KAUNDA and NKUMBULA on the charge of possession of forbidden literature. Before the opening of the trial NKUMBULA (who had been set free on bail) made a speech demanding self-government. The defendants got a sentence of two months in prison at hard labour.

Several provincial organizers of the party were also arrested on different charges and imprisoned for various terms. In addition, the authorities conducted a campaign of slander against the Congress. For example, when an African named KOSAN MWANBA was convicted of arson and sentenced to four years, the government issued an official communiqué, describing the convicted person as "a well-known member of the African National Congress", although he had nothing in common with the party.<sup>1</sup>

In September and October 1955 serious disorders occurred in many places of the mining district. The colonial authorities spoke of African "mass disturbances", assaults on "Whites", but in reality the clashes were in every case provoked by European settlers. Once a settler's car ran over an African, on another occasion a travelling crane operated by a European knocked down and killed an African, and so forth. In such and similar cases the angry Africans reacted by throwing rocks and wrecking cars, machines, buildings, etc. The crowds were dispersed by the police, and three persons who were supposed to have organized the riots were committed to trial and sentenced to nine years' hard labour each. The government issued the Riot Damages Ordinance of 1955, empowering the authorities to impose fines on the inhabitants of riot areas.

In November 1955 NKUMBULA sent Queen ELIZABETH a petition requesting remedy to the grievances of thousands of peasants in connection with the construction of the Kariba dam. (In the Zambezi Valley 29,000 Northern Rhodesia peasants were dispossessed of their land and received no compensation.) The petition elicited no response.

In 1956 the boycott of shops applying racial discrimination flared up in almost all towns of Northern Rhodesia. The Congress resorted to the boycott only for lack of a better expedient. In each case it first lodged a complaint with the Chamber of

<sup>1</sup> See KAUNDA, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

Commerce, requesting that steps be taken to stop discrimination. But the Chamber of Commerce, which consisted exclusively of European and Asian merchants, refused to negotiate with the Congress. Thereupon the boycott started and was brought to success in most cases. But the colonial authorities, backed up by the merchants, already during the boycott arrested a number of its organizers and active participants, who later, when the boycott had attained its goal, were arraigned on trumped-up charges. At Kasama in the north of the country, for instance, where the boycott movement was successful, some of its leaders were sentenced to imprisonment for several years.

In April 1956 the settler organizations convened a big meeting, where they charged that the Congress was aspiring to power and used the boycott only as a means for political ends. Then the press reproached the government for inaction and demanded legislative measures against the Congress. The government was unwilling to take such steps, but in May 1956, when the boycott organized by the Congress in the Mufulira mining district resulted in the stoppage of discrimination, the authorities sent four leaders of the boycott movement to trial on the charge of conspiracy. Counsel for the prosecution, since the incriminated facts could not be denied, gave as a reason for indictment that the complaints could have been presented through the official channels, so the intervention of the Congress had been needless, its only goal was to enhance the popularity of the party. During the trial, however, the court had to state that the boycott had indeed been conducted with a view to stopping the unlawful and fraudulent practices of the shopkeepers, and it acquitted the accused.

The leading role in organizing the boycott was really played by the Congress, but NKUMBULA himself always tried to restrain the movement. On April 23, 1956, he called upon the masses to stop the boycott, and so he obtained that in May the movement came to a standstill for a while; nevertheless, in June it gained fresh vigour in some places. NKUMBULA then stood up against the boycott, which stopped again late in June.

In 1956 the Congress drafted two important documents:

(a) Detailed proposals for a constitutional reform for Northern Rhodesia; (b) a memorandum describing how the federal government and the Northern Rhodesian government neglected the matters of public education, the development of secondary and higher and technical schools.

On September 12, 1956, the government declared the state of emergency in the mining district and ordered 32 union officials arrested. KATILUNGU returned from England four days later.

In November 1956 KAUNDA, in compliance with the Congress resolution passed in October, sent the Colonial Secretary a memorandum demanding: (1) termination of the state of emergency in the mining district; (2) modification of the Constitution to the effect that Northern Rhodesia should have the right to leave the Federation; (3) the voting right for Africans on equal footing with the Europeans as well as equal representation in both the Legislative and the Executive Council.

In January 1957, when the Colonial Secretary visited Northern Rhodesia, the Congress addressed to its members a new circular letter, inviting them not to buy from shopkeepers, and not to work for employers, who violated the interests of the Africans. It emphasized at the same time that any kind of violence must be avoided.

In May 1957 KAUNDA and NKUMBULA went to London to attend the Commonwealth conference organized by the British Labour Party. During their stay in London they asked Colonial Secretary LENNOX-BOYD to receive in audience NKUMBULA



as President of the Congress. But NKUMBULA flew home two days before the date fixed for the meeting. In such conditions, KAUNDA was received by Minister of State for the Colonies PERTH, but the meeting brought no result. When KAUNDA explained the complaints and wishes of the people of Northern Rhodesia, the Minister of State replied by lecturing about the need for patience.

In the second half of 1957 the need for a constitutional reform again came to the forefront in Northern Rhodesia. The masses rose to action. The boycott of shops and pubs was renewed in spite of NKUMBULA's objection, and young leading members of the African Mine Workers' Union protested against the opportunism of their leader, KATILUNGU, and demanded his replacement. Under this pressure KATILUNGU resigned, but NKUMBULA was still undecided. He was against the boycott of pubs and spoke in defence of KATILUNGU, who had this to thank for his reinstatement. This took place in September. In October, on the other hand, KATILUNGU turned against the Congress leaders, charging that they aimed to disorganize the unions. This impelled NKUMBULA to make two speeches in succession during November, strongly attacking the government on account of the proposed constitutional reform, by which it intended again to ensure a two-thirds majority to the European settlers and charging the settlers that they were trying to have the Congress banned and that they supported "sell-outs" like KATILUNGU. In his speeches he warned that the patience of Africans was worn, and there were many who at the forthcoming conference would ask the Congress to cancel the point of its programme providing for abstention from violence. These speeches of NKUMBULA provoked new attacks from the settlers, who again demanded suppression of the A.N.C. The colonial administration was reluctant to take this measure for the time being, but it tabled in the Legislative Council four bills on restrictive measures in the interest of internal security. The "militant" NKUMBULA again backed down: at the December conference of the A.N.C. he managed to prevail upon the opposition, so that the non-violence provision of the programme remained in force. Two months later, in February 1958, at the annual meeting of the African Mine Workers' Union, it was again NKUMBULA who, making use of his influence, calmed down the rebellious elements and secured thereby KATILUNGU's re-election.

#### *The African Miners' Struggle against the Colour Bar*

It was in 1948, during the period of office of the Labour government, that the African mine workers were allowed for the first time to form trade unions.

Until the end of World War II only European miners had unions in Northern Rhodesia. During the war, when it was especially important for the British to raise the production of copper, the union secured an agreement under which the mining companies undertook to employ only unionized workers in the jobs left vacant by union members. An additional provision adopted in 1954 stipulated that only Europeans could be admitted as members of the union.

The first African miners' union was formed at Nkana in 1948. By 1949 it became a powerful African union wielding influence over the whole Copperbelt. Its history in the next ten years was an unceasing struggle against the colour bar, the racial discrimination applied against African miners. The African grievances could be summed up in the following:

1. African miners were paid extremely low wages compared to Europeans. Between 1952 and 1956 the yearly wages in the mines were as follows:

Year	Europeans	Africans
1952	£1,500	£ 86
1953	£1,782	£124
1954	£1,734	£123
1955	£1,943	£134
1956	£2,295	£160

(Included in the above wages paid to Africans is also the cash equivalent of the rations provided to them.)

2. It was made very difficult for Africans to get admission to higher grades and to obtain the necessary qualifications.

3. Africans were denied the grants accorded to European workers (copper bonus,<sup>1</sup> furniture, etc.).

4. The African Mine Workers' Union objected to the existence of the separate Mines African Staff Association on the ground that it deprived the union of the most educated elements of the African miners.

Accordingly, the main demands of the trade union were: wages should be raised considerably; Africans should be enabled to obtain a higher degree of skill and get into higher grades; every kind of racial differentiation and restriction should be eliminated; the African Staff Association should be suppressed.

In this struggle the African union was confronted with two adversaries at once: the European miners' union and the mining companies backed up by the government and the Chamber of Mines.

While the European union and the mining companies were strongly opposed to one another, they all were also against the Africans. The European miners were not against African advancement, nor against better jobs being given to Africans, and, once this was achieved, they were prepared even to admit the Africans to their union, but they insisted on their hard-won right to higher wages and did not tolerate any curtailment of this privilege. On the other hand, the mining companies also wished Africans to acquire greater skill, because they expected to hire underpaid African skilled workers to replace European labour. The European workers, however, prevented the companies from carrying out this scheme by demanding equal pay for African and European skilled labour.

It was characteristic of the attitude of the European workers that they protested against the companies' intention of assigning Africans to higher grades after a practical test. They explained their protest by stressing that, while they did not object to African advancement, this required several years' practice supervised by the trade union, not a simple test. They claimed that the scheme of the employers would produce a decline in the standards of skill, which would be tantamount to deteriorating the situation of the European workers. At the same time the European Mine Workers' Union (by a decision of November 5, 1955) forbade its members to train Africans for their own jobs.

This attitude of the European mine workers of Northern Rhodesia was largely due to South African pressure. The secretary-general of the South African (European) Mine Workers' Union said in April 1955 that his union contributed \$5,000 to the Northern Rhodesia (European) union to help maintain the European standards; he added that it was up to the trade union to determine the extent to which the Africans might advance in skill. He openly asserted that the aim in Rhodesia was

<sup>1</sup> A gratuity based on the current price of copper.



to exploit cheap African labour, and that any modest kind of training Africans would be to the detriment of the European workers, since "if an African is given even the slightest degree of advancement beyond the status of an unskilled worker he will demand the opportunity to go to the very top".<sup>1</sup>

Despite the difficult circumstances the African Mine Workers' Union continued fighting relentlessly. African miners struck more and more frequently, especially in the period from 1954 to 1957, and although most of these strikes ended with failure (owing in part to the servile compliance of African unionist leaders and to the passive attitude of the European miners), they did not lose their fighting spirit, and continued striking from time to time. The strikes which took place in October and November 1954 almost forced the mining companies to yield in the question of higher grades, but the rigid opposition of the European miners spoiled it all. On January 3, 1955, all the African workers of the Copperbelt went on strike (they demanded a rise of 10s. 8d. a shift). At first their European team mates assured them of their solidarity and promised to join in the strike, but they did not do so. The naive and undisciplined African workers returned to work — thousands already in January, followed by more than ten thousand in the course of February — so that production was back to about 65 per cent normal by the end of February. On March 4 the trade union withdrew the demand for a pay raise and terminated the strike. But strikes broke out again. In June 1955, for example, the union called a new strike, but it demanded a rise of only 6s. 8d. this time. According to the official annual report on Northern Rhodesia the African miners staged 158 strikes during 1955, resulting in a loss of half a million African man-days.

The strike movement, however, was not entirely useless. In June 1955 the mining companies granted also the African workers a copper bonus and a cost-of-living allowance, and in December 1955 they consented to the advancement of Africans and began selecting them for training. (In a year, by the end of 1956, already 428 Africans were employed in advanced jobs and 268 were under training; by the end of 1957 the corresponding figures were 621 and 331.) Yet the companies remained adamant on the question of the Mines African Staff Association and the pay rise.

A new strike wave started in June 1956. The colonialists talked about "rolling strikes", since strike followed strike at that time. Now the objective was not to have the rejected old demands fulfilled, but the strikes were launched in protest against regulations which were binding upon Africans but not upon Europeans (leg-guards and other safety devices, clocking in and out, compulsory overtime, etc.). As was pertinently remarked by a British author, "These strikes, of course, were a protest not against leg-guards, but at the whole situation, at the pay rates . . . at European political supremacy, at all that is included in 'the color bar'".<sup>2</sup>

The strike movement gained particular strength in the summer of 1956, when WELENSKY's provocative statements and anti-African actions caused the general political movement to rise and to organize the boycott of stores and pubs discriminating against Africans. In the first days of September, when the labour movement and the independence movement came closer together and KATILUNGU, the union leader who used to restrain the strike movement, was in London, the miners struck in several places, whereupon the colonial authorities accused them of planning a general strike. The administration made this a pretext, besides the general political developments,

<sup>1</sup> *Rhodesia Herald*, Apr. 21, 1955.

<sup>2</sup> PHILIP MASON, *Year of Decision: Rhodesia and Nyasaland in 1960*, London, 1960. In this work the author in a liberal disguise defends the British colonial policies.

for declaring a state of emergency on the Copperbelt as from September 12. Four days later KATILUNGU returned home, called upon the strikers to go back to work, and promised them to discuss their demands with the companies. Thus gradually the strikes came to a halt.

The state of emergency was ended in January 1957, but many trade union leaders were forbidden to leave their areas. At the same time the competent arbitral body (the HARRAGIN tribunal) definitively rejected the African miners' moderate demand for a rise. Again KATILUNGU kept the workers from launching a strike, he said that they had to wait for the trade union to formulate and present new demands.

In 1957 the wage and other labour problems became insignificant compared to the general political demands. Minor strikes still occurred during the year, but an ever growing number of workers took part in the actions of the independence movement. Radical young trade unionists, together with left-wing members of the African National Congress, started a drive to remove KATILUNGU from the union leadership, but NKUMBULA, who followed a compromising political line himself (he tried to stop the boycott movements), used his political influence to save KATILUNGU. He succeeded: KATILUNGU, who had been forced to resign, was reinstated. Moreover, a few months later, at the annual conference of the African Mine Workers' Union in February 1958, he was even re-elected.

### *The 1958 Constitution*

In the second half of 1957, when the disintegration of Britain's African colonial empire had started with the independence of the Sudan (1956) and Ghana (1957), the British imperialists found it necessary, with a view to preventing or at least delaying the independence of their Central African colonies, to introduce in the three territories of the Central African Federation democratic-looking constitutional changes which they expected to please the white settlers and to curb the African aspirations for independence<sup>1</sup>. The Northern Rhodesian government, that is practically the British Governor, was preparing a new constitution for Northern Rhodesia, and for this purpose consulted with WELENSKY and his United Federal Party, which was in power in the Federation and also had a majority in Northern Rhodesia. The A.N.C. of Northern Rhodesia, being apprised of the government's intentions and its talks with the settlers, drafted a new constitution which provided for universal adult franchise on the principle of "one man, one vote" and for equal representation of Africans and non-Africans in the Legislative Council. In February 1958 KAUNDA and NKUMBULA submitted these rather moderate proposals to the British Governor but received no reply.

About the proposals of the African National Congress KAUNDA wrote in an article some time later: "I must confess that I thought our proposals so moderate it seemed to me difficult for the Government to dismiss them. It did not take me long to discover how wrong I was."

After long negotiations with the United Federal Party, on March 28, 1958, the British Governor tabled his draft in the Legislative Council.

The draft proposed a legislature composed of 6 official members, 2 unofficial members nominated by the Governor, and 22 elected unofficials.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The 1957 revision of the Federal constitution was discussed on p. 317.

<sup>2</sup> As to the composition of the Legislative Council under the 1954 constitution, see p. 339-340.



The electoral system proposed by the Governor was so complicated that it was unparalleled even in the history of the colonies so rich in tricky political manoeuvres applied by the colonialists.

The franchise was of two kinds: the qualification of the "ordinary" voter was a yearly income of at least £700 and literacy, or a yearly income of at least £300 and four years' secondary education (higher roll); the "special" voter should have £150 a year or £120 a year and two years' secondary education (lower roll). The higher roll would be mainly European, including also very few Africans other than ministers of religion who had undergone certain courses, and some of the more eminent chiefs. The lower roll would be exclusively African.

This differentiation between "ordinary" and "special" voters was practically a means of discriminating between Europeans and Africans. Actually only Europeans belonged to the "ordinary" category.

The draft provided for 22 constituencies, which were of three kinds. Twelve "ordinary" constituencies should be established in the Copperbelt, along the line of the railway, and in European-inhabited areas; and six "special" constituencies were envisaged for the rest of the country. This meant that the vast majority of the voters in the "ordinary" constituencies would have the higher qualification (Europeans) and in the "special" constituencies the lower qualification (Africans).

In addition there would be four so-called "regrouped" constituencies, two of them being regroupings of "ordinary" and two of "special" constituencies. The two "ordinary" regrouped constituencies (with a vast majority of European voters) would elect an African each, and the two "special" regrouped constituencies (with a vast majority of African voters) would elect a European each. Furthermore it was provided that in the "ordinary regrouped" constituencies, as well as in the two "special regrouped" constituencies reserved for African candidates, the votes on the lower roll were not to count more than one-third of the total of "special" votes; just as in the "special" constituencies (and the two "ordinary regrouped" constituencies reserved for European candidates) the votes on the higher roll were not to count more than one-third of the total of "ordinary" votes.

Two more constitutional provisions made it more difficult for Africans to obtain the right to vote and eligibility.

1. The lower qualification should be raised every year until it reached the level of the higher qualification, after which this single set of qualifications should apply.
2. Every candidate having only the lower qualification would have to obtain a certificate from two-thirds of certain chiefs in his constituency that they did not object to his candidature.

This complicated electoral system secured an almost two-thirds European majority in the Legislative Council (8 elected African members against 22 Europeans, including 6 official, 2 nominated and 14 elected members).

The proposals for the Executive Council contemplated 4 official and 5 unofficial members of ministerial rank appointed by the Governor (but 4 out of 5 should have the higher qualification), and 2 unofficial members who should be assistant ministers. Two of the eleven ministers should be African. The Council would be presided over by the Governor.

In spite of the fact that the government proposals served in every respect to perpetuate the colonial rule of Europeans, ensuring them a great majority both in the Legislative and in the Executive Council, they did not fully satisfy the leaders of the United Federal Party, although their points of view were taken into account to a large extent. They found the proposals too favourable to the Africans and rec-

ommended that the part of the "special" voters in the "ordinary" constituencies should be limited to one-fifth, instead of one-third, of the "ordinary" votes, and the number of "ordinary" votes in the "special" constituencies should count their full value. At the same time they were dissatisfied with the settlers' share in colonial government and proposed that the Executive Council should have only three, not four, official members beside the five unofficials, and that the chairman of the Council should not be the Governor but the unofficial Council member who commanded the most votes in the Legislative Council.

On the other hand, the settlers' right wing, the Dominion Party, could be satisfied neither by the government proposals nor by the additional recommendations of the Federal Party. It saw in the proposals a transgression of pledges and accused the local British administration of having made its proposals under pressure from the Colonial Office in order to give power ultimately into the hands of Africans.

Of course, the Africans protested as one man against the scheme which ensured them neither a majority nor representation on a par with Europeans and served in fact to perpetuate the colonial system. African members of the Legislative Council demanded that the Council should have 12 African members elected by Africans and 12 European members elected by Europeans. A protest meeting of the African National Congress discussed and rejected the government proposals as an anti-African scheme and burnt the White Paper of the colonial government. Then the Congress issued a Black Paper containing the draft approved earlier and presented to the Governor in February, and proposing the parity principle for the legislature with 21 European and 21 African members.

Protests came also from various elected organs of Africans outside parliament. In May and June the seven African Provincial Councils voiced their disapproval, and the African Representative Council in June took a stand in favour of parity in both the Executive and the Legislative Council and demanded the secession of Northern Rhodesia from the Federation.

In another White Paper published in September 1958 Colonial Secretary LENNOX-BOYD specified the comments and proposals of the British government. These differed little from the proposals made by the Northern Rhodesian government, and all but one were new concessions to WELENSKY's racist party. The British scheme agreed with the views of the United Federal Party in that the value of the "ordinary" votes in the "special" constituencies was not to be limited, and that every African candidate, regardless of his qualification, in those constituencies should be obliged to produce a written approval signed by two-thirds of the chiefs in his constituency. The original draft envisaged that there should be at least two Africans among the eleven members of the Executive Council. The Colonial Secretary proposed the omission of this provision on the ground that it would be sufficient to give the Governor instructions to this effect.

After further talks with representatives of the white settlers the Colonial Secretary on December 19 made known his final decision in which he made new concessions to the Europeans: the Governor would consult the leaders of the settlers' majority party before nominating the unofficial members of the Legislative and the Executive Council. It was provided also that it was not mandatory to fill all eleven posts in the Executive Council: if there were not enough suitable candidates, the Council could be declared complete without the full number. In other words, if they found no Africans acceptable to the settlers' party, there should be no African ministers.

The draft was made law. WELENSKY and his party were satisfied, since the British government had modified to the settlers' liking many provisions of the draft which



already had largely taken into consideration the settlers' interests. The right-wing Dominion Party, however, described the new constitution as a heavy blow to the prestige of "civilized government in Central Africa".

The passage of the bill was an open humiliation to the Africans. It is impossible to give a more accurate summary of the Africans' opinion than the comment made by Prof. MASON in his afore-cited book:

"... to Africans the basic facts were that in a country where they were outnumbered by thirty to one, Europeans were still to have a majority in the Legislative Council of two to one and that even these proportions were hedged about by complicated devices which to them seemed designed to prevent their electing the men they regarded as their leaders. Further it seemed that the constitution was meant to enshrine permanently the principle of a very high qualification for the vote. This could only be intended to give a disproportionate say in affairs to Europeans."<sup>1</sup>

This was indeed how Africans evaluated the new constitution, and their leaders who had the people's interests at heart, as we are going to see, held on to this political line. Unfortunately there were African leaders who were ready to set aside principles for the sake of their political careers.

*Upsurge of the Independence Movement. The Zambia African National Congress and the United National Independence Party*

A split occurred in the African National Congress at its conference held in October 1958. NKUMBULA and his supporters opposed the boycott of the government's draft constitution, whereupon KAUNDA and with him the militant members of the Congress resigned and formed a new party, the Zambia African National Congress (Z.A.N.C.), with the primary aim of boycotting the new draft constitution and the elections to be held on its basis.

The immediate cause of the split was the difference of opinion on the issue of boycotting the constitution. In his book *Zambia Shall Be Free*, however, KAUNDA refers to NKUMBULA's countless acts which led to the break between them. For example:

Contrary to the A.N.C. statute, under which the President, Secretary, Treasurer and their deputies had all to be elected after three years in office by the party conference, NKUMBULA demanded that the statute be changed so that the President should be elected by setting up polling booths at every branch.

NKUMBULA fell into the habit of branding anyone who contradicted him as either a Communist or a "sell-out".

During KAUNDA's stay in India NKUMBULA visited the provincial branches and suspended or expelled those officials who he believed had lost confidence in him.

He included in the Executive Committee men and women who had never done any work of organization in the party.

In December 1958 KAUNDA took part in the First Conference of Independent African States at Accra, where delegates of the three territories of the Federation signed an agreement on launching a common campaign for the liquidation of the Federation. From that time on the Z.A.N.C. continued the struggle against the draft constitution under the slogan "self-government now". The Accra agreement was followed by another, entered into by leaders of the three countries at a secret meeting

<sup>1</sup> MASON, *op. cit.*, p. 127.

in January 1959, on co-ordination of the political movements of the respective territories.

In March 1959, when on account of the Nyasaland events the state of emergency was declared and the African National Congress was banned and its leaders imprisoned in Southern Rhodesia and Nyasaland, meetings in Northern Rhodesia, which was then on the eve of elections, were prohibited. On March 5 KAUNDA made a statement to the press, calling upon the people to keep away from the poll and to refrain from violence. What is more, not to provide excuses for the police to intervene, he called off also the big rally convened for March 14-15, where all branches of the party should have been represented. In spite of this, the colonial administration banned the Zambia African National Congress and ordered its leaders — KAUNDA among them — arrested and deported to remote places in the country.

The elections under the new constitution were held in April 1959, and NKUMBULA, who had called off the boycott and consequently won the support of the government, managed to obtain a seat in the Legislative Council.

After KAUNDA was arrested and his party banned, a new political leader made his appearance in the national movement of Northern Rhodesia. MATHIAS CHONA,<sup>1</sup> who had until then been associated with neither of the two parties led by KAUNDA and NKUMBULA, joined the A.N.C. with the intention of pushing it, from within, to take a more progressive, more militant course. In his speeches at popular meetings, he explained the political conception of KAUNDA and soon won followers in the party. When in June it came to a break between NKUMBULA and TITUS B. MUKUPO, the Secretary advocating a progressive policy, CHONA took sides with MUKUPO. During the weeks preceding the party conference he started campaigning, encouraged by his own and MUKUPO's adherents, for his election as President of the party. At the conference of September the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress split: NKUMBULA was elected President by his supporters, and CHONA by his and MUKUPO's followers. Soon afterwards, in October, CHONA and his party faction, which had been joined by a few independent splinter parties as well, formed a new political organization — the United National Independence Party (U.N.I.P.). CHONA was elected President, but he still recognized KAUNDA as leader of the movement. The party wholly espoused the policy of the banned Zambia African National Congress, demanded the release of KAUNDA, and called to fight — by peaceful and lawful means, not through violence but through "positive action" — to liquidate the Federation and to boycott the MONCKTON commission.

On January 8, 1960, KAUNDA was set at liberty, and on January 31 he was elected President of the party in place of the absent CHONA. (On January 22 CHONA had gone to Tunis to attend the Second Conference of African Peoples, and since the Northern Rhodesia administration had in the meantime issued a warrant for his arrest on the charge of rebellion, he did not return after the conference but went to London, where he headed the party's London offices and conducted propaganda for the dissolution of the Federation. In that period he was canvassing in England

<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup> MATHIAS MAINZA CHONA, son of a Tonga chief, was born in Northern Rhodesia in January 1930. He went to a Catholic mission school and later to a secondary school at Lusaka. From 1951 to 1955 he was a clerk and interpreter of the legal department of Northern Rhodesia. In 1955 he won a government scholarship and went to London, where he took his degree in law. In 1958 he returned home but could not start out as a lawyer because of a statutory provision which required previous service as a legal practitioner. Since none of the "white" lawyers accepted him, he again took up jobs as an office employee and typist.



and in several African countries. After KAUNDA's election as President of the party, CHONA in his absence remained Vice-President.)

The new party grew rapidly, which was in part due to the fact that ex-leaders of the Z.A.N.C. in their places of deportation had conducted political activity, as a result of which the new party could easily set up local branches in such remote parts of the country where no political organization had ever existed before. That is how the party could have more than 300,000 members by the end of the year, although the colonial authorities banned the U.N.I.P. in the north (in the Copperbelt) in May 1960, and with the aid of chiefs they did everything possible to deter the Africans from joining the party.

At the end of January 1960 Prime Minister MACMILLAN, when touring Africa, made a visit to Northern Rhodesia. On January 21 in Lusaka he was handed a petition demanding the dissolution of the Federation. The British Prime Minister conferred with KAUNDA who had recently been released from prison.

The following day, three hours before MACMILLAN's arrival, a bomb was found in the Savoy Hotel where the European settler leaders were going to give a dinner in honour of the Prime Minister. During the dinner a crowd of 300 protesters assembled in front of the hotel. The demonstration was organized by the U.N.I.P. The demonstrators carried posters with inscriptions demanding freedom, direct voting and the liquidation of Federation. The gathering was peaceful and the police did not intervene. Only one demonstrator was ordered to fold in his banner which was sending WELENSKY "to hell". The man obeyed, but as soon as MACMILLAN had driven away from the hotel, he again unfurled his banner.

On January 23 at Livingstone the Prime Minister was again received by protesters — about 250 people — with banners bearing inscriptions demanding the dissolution of the Federation and the introduction of universal suffrage.

Two months later, on March 24, when Colonial Secretary MACLEOD was touring the Federation, the United National Independence Party staged further peaceful demonstrations in four mining towns. Although there was no disorder during the demonstrations, the Lusaka court on April 8 sentenced four leaders of the U.N.I.P. to imprisonment, from two to three years, for subversive activity and distribution of inciting literature.

On May 9 the Ndola police had to use tear gas to disperse a big rally of the U.N.I.P. The Africans then erupted in violence at Ndola, Kitwe and other mining localities. They pelted the Europeans' cars with rocks, manhandled a number of Whites, etc. In some places the settlers also used violence. They beat up Africans, etc. The colonial authorities put the blame for the disturbances upon the United National Independence Party, and the police arrested many Africans (120 according to the official report), and on May 12 Governor HONE banned the U.N.I.P. in the western part of the country, the mining region included. All this happened a few days before the visit by Queen Mother ELIZABETH who, the day after the inauguration of the Kariba dam on May 17, flew to Monga, the capital city of Barotseland, at the invitation of the Barotse King (paramount chief). After the events that took place in the mining district a few days earlier, what the Queen Mother said on that occasion about the new dam being a symbol of new understanding in Federation sounded something like mockery.

On his way home from New York in May, KAUNDA talked in London with Colonial Secretary MACLEOD, but without any concrete results.

In the first half of 1960 the big changes taking place on the African continent (a good number of countries became independent at that time) made themselves

felt in Northern Rhodesia as well. During the summer the Northern Rhodesia legislature discussed and passed a bill to end the discriminatory practices against Africans in hotels, restaurants, coffee shops and cinemas. Violators were to be punished by the law. The new legislation was received with great joy by the Africans and with indignation by the white settlers — first of all the mineworkers. And when the act entered into force on September 1, the settlers at first tried to hamper the enforcement of the law by provoking brawls and staging demonstrations. On September 2 the settlers at Kitwe demonstrated and prevented by force the Africans from entering the hotels and other public places or tried to turn them out of there. The police intervened and arrested a few of the most pugnacious demonstrators. And when the police were assaulted, they broke up the crowd with tear gas. The next day a fight broke out at Ndola between settlers and Africans. The scuffle left two injured persons and several damaged cars. The police dispersed the brawlers but arrested none.

Seeing that force was no use, the settlers tried to get round the law by various tricks (for instance, they declared restaurants and picture theatres to be club premises and put up the notice "for members only", or simply charged higher admission fees to Africans). All this, however, was in vain, and they had finally to give in. After several months of negotiations the European mineworkers also understood that the time of racial discrimination was over, and on November 5 the European miners' union voted 1,868 to 1,288 to lift the "colour bar" on the mines, stating at the same time that a uniform wage system should be set up in which skill would be the only standard.

On August 5 KAUNDA sent the British Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary a telegram inviting them to dispatch troops to Rhodesia. At the same time he cabled DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, requesting him to use his influence to protect the Africans and the liberal-minded Europeans, to bring the British government to send troops and, for the sake of peace, start negotiations for a constitutional reform.

On September 29, 1960, the British Colonial Secretary announced that a conference would be convened within six months, at the same time as the constitutional conference of the Federation, to clarify the constitutional status of Northern Rhodesia, and that the aim of both conferences would be to ensure that the Africans received a greater share in the governing of both the Federation and the member countries.

In December 1960 both KAUNDA and NKUMBULA went to London on behalf of their parties to attend the two conferences scheduled for January 1961.

### *The London Conference in February 1961*

The conference was supposed to open towards the end of January, but since delegations only from KAUNDA's Independence Party, NKUMBULA's National Congress and MOFFAT's Liberal Party had arrived on time and because the two settler parties, WELENSKY's United Federal Party and the right-wing Dominion Party, kept away, the conference held no plenary meetings for the time being. Discussions took place behind the scenes in the expectation of the settler parties joining in later. In fact, representatives of the settlers were already in London and talked with MACLEOD behind closed doors, trying to win him over to their point of view. The British government was under strong pressure from both sides. KAUNDA, NKUMBULA and the chiefs' delegates, as well as the Liberal MOFFAT, demanded the enforcement



of the "one man, one vote" principle, consequently an African majority, both in the Legislative and the Executive Council. The Conservative majority of the British Parliament, on the other hand, supported the right-wing settlers and protested against acceptance of the African demands.

The situation was still more envenomed by the fact that Federal Prime Minister WELENSKY ordered the mobilization of two territorial battalions made up of Europeans. Press correspondents reported from Lusaka also that the police was preparing for the state of emergency and the establishment of internment camps for thousands of Africans, and further that plans were made to call in South African troops. Rightist settlers of Northern Rhodesia cabled the British government, demanding the arrest of KAUNDA, whom they accused of having threatened to revive the Mau Mau movement. At the same time a representative (by the name of BOTHA!) of the European mineworkers of Northern Rhodesia said that it would be better to postpone the Northern Rhodesia constitutional conference. Then KAUNDA and other Africans called on Prime Minister MACMILLAN (who received them in the presence of MACLEOD, SANDYS and BUTLER) and strongly protested at WELENSKY's military arrangements. They were joined in their protest by Labour and Liberal M.P.s who labelled WELENSKY's action as a provocative step; but MACLEOD replied that it was a question of preventive measures, which should be endorsed. At the same time 65 Tory M.P.s tabled a motion protesting against the government's constitutional proposals.

The African delegates had been waiting for two weeks to get a look into MACLEOD's constitutional proposals, but his draft was still kept secret from the Africans, and only the settlers' representatives (who were officially absent from the conference) were allowed to see it. (A high official of the Federal Home Office, EVANS, took a copy with him to Salisbury.) At last the conference met on February 14. MACLEOD briefly spoke of the principles of his draft, but without making its text public. An African representative said angrily after the short meeting that MACLEOD had been expected to present detailed proposals for the franchise and the composition of the Legislative Council, but he had offered only general principles instead.

The text of the constitutional proposals was still not made known to the British Parliament. The number of Tory M.P.s protesting against this secrecy had already risen to ninety, so that a split threatened in the Conservative Party.

The futile discussion about the different minor details proposed by the Colonial and Commonwealth Office to reconcile the views of the settlers and the Africans regarding the issue of the franchise continued until the 17th, when the conference was closed without any result. (The settlers wanted to subject the franchise to high qualifications in order to prolong their rule, while the Africans demanded a franchise that would secure an African majority.) The African delegations led by KAUNDA and NKUMBULA issued a joint statement describing the talks of the past days as a "political comedy", and joined the liberal MOFFAT in releasing a half-page statement to be published in *The Times*, appealing to the British government against the settlers' pressure and pointing out that the European interests in Northern Rhodesia could be safeguarded for the future only if power was passed into the hands of the African majority. On the other side, the Colonial Office announced that it was going to publish a White Paper on the two-month-long conference.

KAUNDA and NKUMBULA called on the Prime Minister and the Secretary of State for the Colonies and told them bluntly that the British government was responsible for the failure of the conference, since it had yielded to WELENSKY's pressure, and they demanded that the conference be reconvened immediately. MACMILLAN refused to comply and called upon the African leaders emphatically to reassure their followers

that the discussions that had gone on for two months "had helped to clear the atmosphere" and a new conference would be called in case of necessity.

When leaving KAUNDA said: "The British government has deceived us."

The same day when KAUNDA and NKUMBULA talked to the Prime Minister in London, the British government gave instructions to redeploy the British troops stationed in Northern Rhodesia and to alert them as an "emergency measure in the interest of public security".

#### *Political Crisis in Northern Rhodesia*

On February 20 the U.N.I.P. and the African National Congress jointly addressed an open letter to the Queen, requesting independence for Northern Rhodesia immediately, but hardly had 24 hours passed when they retracted, obviously because they came to know that in the Cabinet meeting of February 20 MACMILLAN had talked over the situation created by the unsuccessful conference and had presented the governments' proposals to be published in a White Paper the next day. The African leaders thought it better to wait for the government's proposals.

Next day MACLEOD in parliament set forth the proposals published in the White Paper, which concerned essentially the composition of the legislature and the government. The draft provided that 15 members of parliament should be elected by Africans, 15 by Europeans, and another 15 by Africans and Europeans on a common roll, and the government should have 10 members, including two African and two European members of parliament. MACLEOD emphasized that in the last analysis the future parliament and government of Northern Rhodesia would have an African majority, but for the time being the two races should get a chance for equal representation. The fact that the scale would be tipped to one side or the other by those so-called "national representatives" who enjoyed the confidence of both races was supposed to promote co-operation between Europeans and Africans and the emergence of an inter-racial society. The elaboration of details on the principles outlined in the White Paper and the definitive wording of the draft constitution — since neither side could be made to agree during the conference — should be left to the British Governor of Northern Rhodesia, who would negotiate in Lusaka with the political leaders.

MACLEOD intended this hypocritical speech to put down the resistance of both parliamentary parties, but he attained just the contrary. The Labourites were critical of the obscurity of the proposals which in their view could not ensure an African majority, while the right-wing Tories objected that the proposals enabled the Africans to obtain a majority. (Ninety-eight Conservative members submitted a written motion to parliament, identifying themselves entirely with WELENSKY's point of view.) Commonwealth Secretary SANDYS also took the floor and, to reassure the Africans, severely criticized WELENSKY for his provocative statements which, in his (SANDYS') view, served only to deepen the mutual distrust of Africans and Europeans. The Conservative members were shocked to hear SANDYS' speech censuring the Prime Minister of a Commonwealth country, but MACMILLAN was only nodding approval of what his colleague said.

If the British government did not succeed in reassuring the Africans, it did succeed in confounding their leaders: these did not understand what the British government really wanted. KAUNDA, who had been listening from the gallery, spoke of MACLEOD's scheme in the following terms: "I am not saying it will work or not work. I do not know it. I only know half of it. I am not in a position where I can decide anything."



On February 21 WELENSKY told an audience of 300 at the United Federal Party's congress in Salisbury that the Federation had come to a crisis, and added: "I hope that we will be able to come to an amicable agreement with the British government. Whatever the state of things, it is my intention to stand firmly on the principles that have seen this party into power — at whatever cost."

The Northern Rhodesia executive of WELENSKY's party, JOHN ROBERTS, called the British proposals "diabolical", and said that if the United Federal Party and the Dominion Party, which endorsed WELENSKY's opposition to the British government, joined efforts and formed a united front against the Northern Rhodesian government, they would be able to countermining every arrangement of the British officials.

The Federal Defence Minister in a radio message on the same night ordered four battalions of the Royal Rhodesia Regiment to be mobilized and its reserves to be called up.

On February 22 five Ministers of WELENSKY's party resigned from the Northern Rhodesian government in protest against the British government's constitutional proposals. That same day WELENSKY declared that the British government had broken with the partnership principle it had advocated so far and was prepared, under African pressure, to pass the helm of the country into the hands of irresponsible elements,<sup>1</sup> but he, WELENSKY, would prevent this by all available means. He announced also that he had ordered 5,000 territorial troops to be called up and that the Federal government had issued an ordinance to suspend capital exports from the Federation. At the same time rumour had it, evidently not without his knowledge, that the Prime Minister was going to dissolve parliament and call new general elections which should give him authority to urge the independence of the Federation and secession from the United Kingdom.

The African leaders branded WELENSKY's statement and attitude as a provocative manoeuvre and warned the Africans to keep calm. A member of U.N.I.P. said: "The Federal Government may actually be intent on provoking our people into acts of violence so that they can declare a state of emergency here and we are guarding against that."

On February 23, an hour after the arrival in Lusaka of its delegation which had been to London, the U.N.I.P. held a meeting to report on the conference. The vice-chairman of the delegation, MOSA KAPWEPWE, called WELENSKY "the white Tshombe" and remarked, referring to the military arrangements: "Let us not be provoked by the steel helmets of the police and the Federal Army. If the British people are not prepared to defend us, we will defend ourselves because that is a natural instinct."

The same day, twenty-five of the Northern Rhodesian chiefs met in Lusaka and accepted the British proposals as temporary measures promising some progress to the Africans, but they demanded further extension of the franchise and reaffirmed their claim that Africans must have the majority in the Legislative and the Executive Council. Finally they expressed "grave concern" over the mobilization of white troops, which even the most peaceable Africans regarded as a direct challenge.

Still on February 23 an ultra-rightist organization, the "Federal Fighting Force", held a meeting in a Lusaka movie theatre, where about 1,200 people attended. The speakers heaped gross insults upon the British government, especially Secretary

<sup>1</sup> In his report on this statement by WELENSKY the London correspondent of *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* made the following comment: "To the Salisbury government 'racial partnership' has so far meant the maintenance of the settlers' rule, and 'power in responsible hands' the supremacy of the white minority and utter discrimination against the black majority."

MACLEOD and Governor HONE (as well as MOFFAT, the liberal settler politician, whom they called the "white Kafir"). The participants pledged support to WELENSKY who they hoped would soon obtain independence for the Federation and secession from the United Kingdom. When the principal speaker concluded his speech by shouting into the mike, "The English out!", the frenzied crowd of settlers burst into a prolonged thunderous ovation.

Some settlers made no secret of having large supplies of hidden firearms. The colonial administration feared that extreme elements would provoke clashes with Africans. Governor HONE therefore spoke in the radio to render account of the London conference and to warn the population to keep calm. He spoke of the British constitutional proposals as a "realistic solution" which was "intended to be genuinely non-racial . . . to help to close the wide gap that exists in our political life today". He alleged that "the plan does not stipulate a majority for either race nor deny it to either race. It does not deal in terms of race at all."

KAUNDA, before leaving London on the 23rd, gave a news conference at the airport and made a placid, moderate, but categorical statement. He described WELENSKY's remarks as "irresponsible outbursts" and the reference to partnership of races as "mendacious appeals to racial prejudice". He claimed that it was possible "for all races in my country to live and work together in peace and friendship, but we do not want to hear any more humbug about partnership". He stated that WELENSKY was incapable of introducing a non-racial modern system of government. He called upon the Europeans living in the country not to back up WELENSKY's irresponsible actions, not to follow him on the road of racial prejudice and not to heed his invitation to use violence against Africans, for the only way to avoid repeating the tragedy of the Congo was: not to follow the Belgian example.

NKUMBULA, on the other hand, who had a mind disposed to confused bombastic phrases and extremism, was not only confounded but even misled by the British government. On February 20 he still threatened that Africans would respond to violence with violence: "If we are provoked by Sir Roy Welensky, if he starts pulling the trigger, shooting down Africans, we shall not tolerate. Welensky will get it. The moment he starts doing that we will meet him with violence."

But a few days after, when leaving London, he made a statement at the airport, affirming that in the confrontation between WELENSKY and the British government the Africans should take sides with Britain: "Much as we African nationalist leaders are opposed to the scheme which Colonial Secretary Iain Macleod has proposed for Northern Rhodesia, we will, without doubt, side with Britain in the event of Sir Roy revolting against Her Majesty's Government. We believe the British Government is the lesser of the two evils."

Considering the "menacing situation" in Northern Rhodesia, the Federal government enforced further military precautions. On February 24 leave was cancelled with the police, and on the 26th it was decided to form two new battalions of the "National Guard" composed of settlers.

On February 25 the South African government assured WELENSKY of its "full moral support", and Foreign Minister Louw of South Africa in parliament glorified WELENSKY as the "defender of white civilization", and concluded in these words: "The time may come when South Africa, Northern and Southern Rhodesia and the Portuguese territories will have to join forces to preserve white civilization on the African continent."

MACMILLAN and his Cabinet felt uneasy about the crisis in Northern Rhodesia. What disturbed them was not the discontent of Africans but the rebellious mood of WELENSKY and the settlers. They found it necessary to appease WELENSKY for



two reasons. First, they wanted to avoid the heavy blow which the British Empire would face if WELENSKY carried out his threat, if the Federation seceded from Britain. Second, MACMILLAN, who was already preoccupied with the forthcoming Commonwealth conference, cherished the hope that with WELENSKY's help he would succeed in preventing the Union of South Africa from leaving the British Commonwealth.

Therefore the British High Commissioner for the Federation, METCALFE, was urgently recalled for reporting. Upon his arrival in London on February 26 he first met SANDYS and then was received by MACMILLAN in the presence of MACLEOD and SANDYS for a long talk. According to the official version they decided that, in order to control the situation in Northern Rhodesia (to prevent possible bloody riots), Europeans and Africans must be made to meet again at the conference table. Further developments showed, however, that this was not the point, but they decided to appease WELENSKY by means of personal persuasion.

Early in March WELENSKY again went to London at MACMILLAN's invitation and spent weeks in confidential talks with the British Prime Minister, who entertained him to lunch and dinner on several occasions. He had parallel talks with extremist elements of the Conservative Party whom he managed to win over to his cause.

WELENSKY got what he wanted. With his talks lasting for two weeks and his propaganda manoeuvres in the British Parliament he not only won the support of the Tory majority of parliament but managed to prevail on MACMILLAN and his colleagues to put aside for the time being even the not too encouraging proposals contained in the White Paper and to promise further talks — without fixing a date. MACMILLAN's office issued an official statement saying that the British government was prepared "to consider proposals within the framework and general spirit of the White Paper and the statements by ministers in the House of Commons which may be put forward by the political groups in Northern Rhodesia", and that "due regard will be paid to the considerations which the Federal Government have brought to the attention of the United Kingdom Government."

Before leaving London on March 20, WELENSKY commented upon the government's statement and expressed his satisfaction that the British government had stopped forcing the implementation of its original Northern Rhodesia scheme, adding that that was what he had wanted to get from his talks with MACMILLAN.

MACMILLAN's double-tongued statement and WELENSKY's self-complacent comment convinced the Africans that what they had feared had come to pass: WELENSKY succeeded in frightening MACMILLAN by asserting that the Northern Rhodesia constitutional reform might lead the settlers in Southern Rhodesia and the Africans in Northern Rhodesia to rise in revolt, and thus he got the British government to drop the constitutional reform for the time being.

KAUNDA, whom the protracted London talks of WELENSKY and certain measures taken by Governor HONE<sup>1</sup> in the first half of March had led to believe that the British government would not yield to WELENSKY's pressure, was now compelled to return to his former position that the only passable way of the African struggle for independence was leading through passive resistance.

In the first days of April 1961 a new political party was formed in Northern Rhodesia — the United National Republican Party (U.N.R.P.). Its leader, DIXON KONKOLO, stated that his party would fight to make Northern Rhodesia — like

<sup>1</sup> For instance, he appointed a colonial official and three liberal settlers (among them MOFFAT who was in league with KAUNDA) to replace WELENSKY's men who had resigned from the government.

Ghana and India — an independent republic within the British Commonwealth of Nations. One of the principal demands of this party was the claim for the introduction of an election law with a turnout of two million voters. (The population of Northern Rhodesia in 1961 was nearly two and a half million.)

In April 1961 KENNETH KAUNDA took part in an African Freedom Day ceremony in New York, after which he gave a press conference in the headquarters of the Council on African Affairs. He explained in detail that his party wished to achieve the country's independence by means of passive resistance. At the same time in reply to a recent menacing speech by WELENSKY, he pointed out that the Federal Prime Minister's refusal to allow a progressive change towards majority rule was proof of his own political and moral bankruptcy.

#### *New Talks in London*

During the London talks in February MACLEOD had originally intended, in the spirit of the MONCKTON recommendations (though with some difference), to secure broader African representation in parliament. But, yielding to pressure from two sides — WELENSKY, on the one hand, and the right wing of the Conservative Party on the other — he gave up this plan, and the conference ended without any result. Governor HONE of Northern Rhodesia, after long consultations with WELENSKY and African leaders, worked out new constitutional proposals but did not make them public for the time being. KAUNDA and MOFFAT stated that the new constitution would perpetuate the white minority regime and they refused to take part in its preparation.

The Governor, who went to London in mid-June to present his proposals to the British government, threatened resignation in case the government would submit to WELENSKY's pressure. On June 19 MACMILLAN and three of his colleagues (MACLEOD, SANDYS and BUTLER) had a conversation with HONE and discussed his proposals in Cabinet the same night. Neither the proposals nor the Cabinet decision were published for the time being.

KAUNDA also flew to London and warned the competent ministers that, in case they would revise to WELENSKY's liking their original scheme which in February they had refrained from carrying out under WELENSKY's pressure, he could not guarantee that he would be able to hold the Africans in check as before with the slogan of non-violence. MOFFAT also came to London to help MACLEOD and the Governor against the pro-Welesky members of the British government and parliament.

Labour P.M.s reminded the Colonial Secretary not to let himself be diverted from his previous proposals to find favour with the settlers. MACLEOD gave the elusive reply that the "scope and spirit" of the constitution would remain unchanged.

WELENSKY first sent Minister of Law GREENFIELD to London to represent his point of view. On June 25 WELENSKY tried to bring pressure to bear on the British government by having his Defence Minister issue a communiqué on the manoeuvres of the Federal air force to be held in common with the South African air force.

He prepared to go to London a few days later. He was waiting at the Salisbury airport (he already had his luggage checked in) when an unexpected phone call came from London, from Commonwealth Secretary SANDYS. What they talked about was not divulged at the time, but something important must have happened, because



the Prime Minister did not board the plane bound for London, but remained in Salisbury.

On June 26 MACLEOD submitted his new constitutional proposals to the House of Commons. He claimed that the changes he had made in the proposals contained in the White Paper of February 17 would assure "a substantially increased number of African members" in the Northern Rhodesian legislature. But the fact was that, while the complicated electoral system envisaged in the new draft increased the number of African members to some extent, the majority in parliament — and consequently the power — was still ensured to the European settlers. And this provision was couched in confusing and complicated terms which the British government found fit to deceive the Africans, making them believe they would get a chance of obtaining the majority in parliament.

In this awareness WELENSKY and his associates heard MACLEOD's announcement with pleasure and satisfaction. Federal Minister of Law GREENFIELD, after phoning WELENSKY to report on the events, gave a news conference where he expressed his agreement and qualified the new draft as "a big stride ahead" which would make it easier for WELENSKY's candidates to win at the elections. At the same time he did not fail to add, in order to hoodwink the Africans, that he did not find the solution entirely satisfactory because the achievement of an African parliamentary majority on its basis was still "possible but not probable". WELENSKY himself, in the Federal Parliament in Salisbury, also praised the new constitution as "a reasonably workable document" that might "promote a moderate and non-racial approach to the problems of government".

But the Africans were not to be deceived by the British government and the racist settlers. On the following day KAUNDA, speaking on behalf of his party, censured the constitutional proposals in biting terms, declaring that the British government might no longer rely on the trust of the African population of Northern Rhodesia, whom it had cheated vilely when offering "Welensky's puppets the parliamentary majority on a silver platter". He announced also that his party would boycott the new constitution.

Also the party of the Indian minority indignantly rejected the constitutional reform. However, in the British Parliament the Labour opposition, which had until then spoken up eloquently in favour of the African cause and violently attacked the government, now suddenly backed down. Its leaders, GAITSKELL and CALLAGHAN, while stating their displeasure, assured the government of their understanding.

Governor HONE was aware that the new constitutional reform would create a tense situation in the country. It involved the risk that KAUNDA, who had so far done his best to keep back his supporters from resorting to violence, would no longer be able to restrain the indignant masses. Therefore the Governor warned KAUNDA privately of the danger to which his party would be exposed if it left the path of legality.

But the development of the situation in Northern Rhodesia did not solely depend on what KAUNDA was going to do. WELENSKY thought it necessary to take further military precautions. A few days after the communiqué on the joint manoeuvres of the Federal and South African air forces (the day following the publication in London of the new constitutional proposals), it was officially reported that the Federal Defence Minister had had talks in Luanda with the Portuguese Governor-General of Angola.

In June KAUNDA proclaimed the new tactical programme of his party, calling upon the Africans to exercise passive resistance to the government schemes without

resorting to violence. Leaders of the party made propaganda for this tactic at mass meetings throughout the country. Since a number of sabotage acts<sup>1</sup> were officially imputed to U.N.I.P. members, the Federal government banned the party in the Northern Province of Northern Rhodesia and dispatched there 400 African riflemen under European officers to reinforce the troops and police.

KAUNDA, who was apprised of the event while waiting at the Salisbury airport on his way to an international youth conference in Dar es Salaam, denied that his party would have had anything to do with sabotage and said: "There can be no justification whatever for troop movements at the present time. They only excite the people and aggravate the tense situation. This action means the end of any understanding between the races."

On August 11 the U.N.I.P. cabled Prime Minister MACMILLAN, asking him to send British troops to Northern Rhodesia to restore order. KAUNDA, on the other hand, who was staying in London, gave a press conference on August 13, where he appealed to the people of Great Britain to get the British government to accept a Northern Rhodesia constitution securing an equitable African representation in the legislature. He said he did not appeal direct to the British government because he had completely lost confidence in it. He added that if the government was unwilling to comply, the Africans would continue fighting according to a prearranged plan, but this plan still barred the use of violence.

Back in Lusaka on August 18, KAUNDA publicly burnt his identity card and demanded that the British government send a commission of inquiry to Northern Rhodesia where police and troops had killed more than thirty Africans. (Police reports admitted only 11 fatal cases having occurred in the course of a month.) He also said that the passive resistance action of his party had nothing in common with the arsonists and other saboteurs.

Based on police reports, the Northern Rhodesia colonial administration on August 22 banned U.N.I.P. also in the Luapula district adjoining the Northern Province and empowered the provincial police authorities to make arrests without a warrant.

On the same day at Kabuta-Kombanija, in the Luapula district, the U.N.I.P.'s provincial headquarters was set to fire and reduced to ashes. The police explained the case by alleging that the burning had been due to revenge, since the population bore grudge against the party, and local party members were displeased with KAUNDA's programme of non-violence.

On August 23 KAUNDA again announced the start of a new campaign of passive resistance in protest against the constitutional proposals: he would bombard the British political leaders with letters of protest, invite the Africans to arrange the burning in public of their identity cards and tax receipts, and launch a broad-based strike movement. "The only charge I bring against myself today is that I trusted the British government beyond measure", he said in conclusion. The same day KAUNDA addressed identical telegrams to President KENNEDY of the United States and Secretary-General HAMMARSKJÖLD of the United Nations: "The massacre of Africans and the deportation of village people still continue in the Northern Province and Luapula district. I appeal to you for intervention and for the consideration of the question at an emergency session of the UN General Assembly. I ask you also to study the situation with Mr. Macmillan." Simultaneously MAKASA, the Tanganyika representative of KAUNDA's party, cabled MACLEOD and called upon him

<sup>1</sup> It was alleged that Africans provided with arms were marauding in the region of Abercorn and Kasama; three Africans were arrested for wrecking a road bridge, etc.



to intervene "to save the lives of Africans who are being killed in your name". And in a statement to the press he called attention to the fact that the authorities were preparing to arrest KAUNDA, the leader of the banned party.

Despite the fact that KAUNDA and his party had called the Africans to non-violent resistance, a spontaneous massive armed resistance was brewing in the Northern Province and Luapula district. A report of August 25 told of the disarming in the Northern Province of 300 Africans who, equipped with modern firearms, had assaulted the police stations. The report admitted the killing of 18 Africans.

Early in September sporadic riots occurred on the Copperbelt and in the capital, Lusaka. The U.N.I.P. grew so rapidly that its leaders obviously were unable to get all party branches to keep to the adopted line. A report of September 7 put the number of Africans arrested during the month-long disturbances at 1,896, including 971 U.N.I.P. members. Several leaders of the party were arrested on the charge of inciting to rebellion.

WELENSKY, who was alarmed as well at the Northern Rhodesia unrest as at the military action started by the central Congolese government and the United Nations forces against the separatist Katanga Province bordering on Northern Rhodesia, flew to Lusaka on September 7 to talk over the situation with Governor HONE and the Northern Rhodesian government. After his return to Salisbury he took "a precautionary measure to protect the Northern Rhodesia border following the outbreak of violent fighting in Katanga": he commanded infantry and mechanized troops and air force units to the Katanga frontier of Northern Rhodesia.

In this connection WELENSKY spoke in the Lusaka parliament where he unmasked himself as a reactionary colonialist demagogue. He labelled the United Nations intervention in Katanga as an "utterly irresponsible action", "a serious threat to our security". He said that "the whole record of the United Nations in the Congo is a disgraceful example of the techniques of a bull in a China shop". But he praised the separatist rebel TSHOMBE and promised to give "as much support and succour as we possibly can to the people of Katanga..." "Arrangements are already in hand to receive refugees, who will be treated as political refugees forced to flee because of their democratic beliefs."

MACMILLAN flatly rejected the proposal of KAUNDA for the British government to appoint a commission to inquire into the recent events in Northern Rhodesia. In his reply to KAUNDA he stated that the official reports had convinced him that the security organs of Northern Rhodesia had acted with "commendable restraint" to oppose the provocations of riotous extreme elements. KAUNDA said the reply depressed him and added: "If there are to be more deaths in Northern Rhodesia, I must blame them on the British Government." He said also that the door was still open for talks, although the Prime Minister's reply was "obviously a slam of the door, right in my face".

This notwithstanding, KAUNDA continued his personal talks in London first with Minister of State for Colonial Affairs PERTH and then repeatedly with MACLEOD. Before his departure from London, on September 13, the Colonial Office issued an official statement saying that the talks about changes in the constitutional proposals would be resumed as soon as the recent riots in the country ceased.

On his way home KAUNDA conferred with KENYATTA in Nairobi and with NYERER in Dar es Salaam. In Nairobi he said he had been pleased to read the Colonial Secretary's statement of the day before, which held out the prospects of further constitutional discussions. He stated that in the actual circumstances he regarded it as his duty to do his utmost to ensure that order was restored in his country.

By the end of September the riots were practically brought to an end. A report of September 29 mentioned the arrest of about 2,600 Africans, of whom more than 1,900 were convicted, several U.N.I.P. members among them.

Minor disturbances still took place in October. For example, on October 4, soldiers clashed with Africans in a suburb of Ndola. The police opened fire on the brawlers, killing an African and wounding two.

On October 19 KAUNDA on a visit to India held a press conference at New Delhi, where he said that in Northern Rhodesia the Africans who made up the vast majority of the population were treated as "fourth-class citizens", but his party, which was waging a non-violent struggle to obtain reforms from the British government, had scored significant successes. He said that Britain faced the alternative of building "more prisons" or granting "our legitimate rights".

#### *Controversies over the Constitutional Reform*

On February 27, 1962, the British Cabinet approved, and the next day MAUDLING presented to the Commons, the new draft of the Northern Rhodesia constitution, under which the Legislative Council would consist of 45 members: 15 members would be elected by 70,000 Europeans, another 15 by two and a half million Africans, and the remaining 15 would be elected on the so-called "national roll" of European and African voters. But every candidate would have to poll, in addition to the votes of his own category, a certain percentage of the votes on the other ballot. And this percentage figure was set so that MACMILLAN himself admitted that the European candidate had to receive one of every 25 African votes, and the African candidate had to obtain one of every 8 European votes.

This provision was a compromise between the proposal of February and that of June 1961; as is known, the former proposal had been rejected under pressure from WELENSKY, who viewed it as an excessive concession to Africans (who were not satisfied with it either), and the second met with the indignant opposition of the Africans because it was made to suit WELENSKY's intentions.

The government presented the new draft, claiming that it offered the Africans a change of obtaining a "small majority" in the Legislative Council. In reality the government started from the premise that under such an electoral system neither the Africans nor the Europeans would be able to win the absolute majority, so that they would be compelled to form a coalition government or to make inter-party agreements. There were some who naively thought that under this system seats in the legislature, and consequently ministerial places, would be accessible to persons who enjoyed the confidence of both races. Only WELENSKY and his adherents speechified about a serious African majority, although it is hardly imaginable that they also believed in it. Their bitter attacks on the British government came in very handy for the latter to use it, as an argument toward the Africans, demonstrating that London was opposed to WELENSKY's policy and wished to satisfy the Africans. In fact the British government was still hoping that such and similar halfway measures would perpetuate the settlers' rule and rescue the Federation.

To the Africans, however, it was beyond doubt that the new measure was also intended to save the settlers' regime.

The Cabinet decision, still before its presentation to parliament, was made known to the British High Commissioner for the Federation, who informed WELENSKY accordingly.



WELENSKY immediately flew to London uninvited, to make a last attempt to prevent parliament from passing the reform. He repeatedly talked for hours with MACMILLAN, SANDYS and MAUDLING. He threatened that he was ready to resort to any means, including the use of armed force, to stop the disintegration of the Federation and maintain the settlers' minority regime.

Prime Minister WHITEHEAD of Southern Rhodesia, who was also staying in London, made a provocative statement to the press. He alleged that Southern Rhodesia had a well-tested constitution which promoted the progress of the Federation towards an inter-racial society. But to protect this development, the Federation had to thwart the aggression coming from the north, because African peoples "talk of their coming to liberate our people. Our people don't need liberating. They are much more free than the people who want to liberate them."

In the British Parliament the majority of the Conservative Party, which had so far supported WELENSKY and had helped him to put pressure on the government, was now divided. Some M.P.s were invariably against the constitutional reform, but the moderate majority were in favour of its adoption, because they were convinced that the new constitution still safeguarded the European majority. The Labourites pursued a double-dealing policy. Their spokesmen, HEALEY, accused the government of betrayal, because in his view the constitutional provisions did not meet the requirement of equal rights, since Europeans were granted favours which ten times surpassed the rights accorded to Africans. Nevertheless, he concluded his speech with this remark: "In spite of that we hope the African leaders will accept these proposals and co-operate in carrying them out in the forthcoming elections."

KAUNDA and his party were resolutely against the new constitutional proposals because they saw in them new hypocritical manoeuvres of the British government. Still before the publication of the draft, KAUNDA reminded the Africans to be prepared to go on strike and sit through six months even, should the British government again yield to WELENSKY's insistence. When the proposals were made known, the leaders of the party took a unanimous stand against them. KAMALONDO, the party's representative in London, stated: "To us, also the constitution called new is unacceptable, and this would bring us no change." And KAUNDA said in Lusaka that, if the British government stood by its scheme, "the negotiations might get to an impasse". At the same time he demanded that WELENSKY be immediately arrested in London and detained in custody until the issue of the constitution was settled. To support this demand he claimed that to his knowledge WELENSKY was planning to arrest Governor HONE of Northern Rhodesia and to proclaim the secession of the Federation from the United Kingdom.

#### *The Question of Northern Rhodesia before the United Nations*

Throughout April and May 1962 the UN Special Committee on decolonization was discussing the question of Northern Rhodesia. KAUNDA, who was heard by the Committee, demanded the immediate release of his country from the Federation and its constitution as an independent state. In his statement he said that Britain refused to end the policy of racial discrimination in Northern Rhodesia, and he requested the United Nations to send out a Commission to look into the situation. He also charged that WELENSKY, to defend the dominating position of the big foreign companies having interests in Northern Rhodesia and Katanga, was colluding with

the Congolese secessionist TSHOMBE, who jeopardized the independence and unity of the young Republic of the Congo.

The Soviet Union submitted a draft resolution, by which the United Nations should call upon the United Kingdom to grant independence to Northern Rhodesia immediately, that is still in 1962. On May 16 the Committee adopted a resolution, by 12 votes to 4 (those voting against it were Australia, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States), demanding independence for Northern Rhodesia without setting a date, and proposing that the forthcoming session of the General Assembly include again in its agenda the question of Northern Rhodesia.<sup>1</sup>

On his way home from New York, KAUNDA on April 25 made a statement in London, emphasizing that eighty per cent of the armed forces of the Federation consisted of Boer mercenaries recruited in the Republic of South Africa.

#### *Elections in October 1962*

The new Constitution came into force in September 1962 and the new elections took place on October 30. KAUNDA's United National Independence Party put up candidates in all 45 constituencies, WELENSKY's United Federal Party ran in only 28 electoral districts. (It saw no point in setting up candidates in areas with an overwhelming African population.) Further participants were NKUMBULA's A.N.C. and MOFFAT's Liberal Party. Characteristically, NKUMBULA and WELENSKY agreed between themselves not to let their candidates stand against each other's party in four constituencies but to support each other's candidates there.

WELENSKY's party won 15 seats, the U.N.I.P. 14, and NKUMBULA's party obtained 5 seats. Eleven seats remained undecided for different reasons. To settle the issue, by-elections were called for December. (MOFFAT's Liberal Party gained no seat and decided its own dissolution.)

The election results did not truly reflect the relation of forces. For example, WELENSKY's party which won 15 seats was supported by only one-fifth of the voters, while two-thirds of the electorate voted for the U.N.I.P. which gained 14 seats.

In connection with the elections in Northern Rhodesia an interesting incident took place — in Katanga. About a hundred Northern Rhodesian workers employed in the Katanga mines on October 30 dropped in at the British Consulate in Elisabethville with the intention of voting, since under the law those staying abroad were also entitled to vote. When they were told that only seventeen of them had the right to vote, they vented their anger by throwing a barrage of stones at the Consulate building, injuring also the Consul on the head. Katangese troops dispersed them and arrested fifteen protesters.

#### *Further Talks in London*

Towards the end of November, between the October elections and the by-elections to be held in December, KAUNDA again flew to London to try once again, together with NKUMBULA, to persuade BUTLER to revise the constitution which had come into force in September, and which was hurtful to African interests, or to work out another constitution satisfying the African demands.

<sup>1</sup> The U.S. representative tried to block the resolution by presenting a meaningless counter proposal, but the Committee rejected it by a large majority.



At the October elections NKUMBULA still had been in league with WELENSKY's party to obtain the majority, but when his scheme failed he scrapped this pact. KAUNDA now tried to talk NKUMBULA into a pact of their two parties with a view to forming a coalition government, thus to prevent WELENSKY's United Federal Party from coming to power again in Northern Rhodesia and from thwarting the liquidation of the Federation. To win NKUMBULA over to his plan, he arranged for him to meet NYERERE and KENYATTA; moreover, he made it possible for NKUMBULA and his party to join P.A.F.M.E.C.S.A.,<sup>1</sup> of which he was President.

In the course of the preceding weeks KAUNDA had repeated meetings and talks with TSHOMBE, in spite of the fact that, as a supporter of the Pan-African movement of unity, he condemned TSHOMBE's separatist policy. He did so, on the one hand, at NKUMBULA's request (who in the past, as also at the October elections, had enjoyed TSHOMBE's financial support), with a view to persuading TSHOMBE to continue giving financial aid to NKUMBULA even after entering into coalition with the U.N.I.P., and, on the other hand, because as a representative of P.A.F.M.E.C.S.A. he wanted to prevail upon TSHOMBE to give up co-operation with WELENSKY.

On December 3, still before talking with BUTLER in London, KAUNDA and NKUMBULA had another meeting. On his way to New York BOMBOKO, the Foreign Minister of the central Congolese government, stopped in London to meet KAUNDA and NKUMBULA. Namely the Congo government took alarm at the talks between the Northern Rhodesian leaders and the separatist TSHOMBE. Present at the meeting were also KOINANGE (secretary of P.A.F.M.E.C.S.A.) of Kenya and MUNANKA (NYERERE's parliamentary secretary), as well as the London envoys of the governments of the Congo and Tanganyika. All the participants reassured BOMBOKO that neither the African leaders of Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika nor P.A.F.M.E.C.S.A. had changed their view that Katanga was an integral part of the Congo and that TSHOMBE must come to terms with the central Congolese government.

KAUNDA's and NKUMBULA's joint talks in London seemed to be successful. The two politicians issued a communiqué stating their satisfaction with their conversations with BUTLER and reiterating their demand for the dissolution of the Federation and the drafting of a new Northern Rhodesia constitution in accordance with the wishes of the African majority. At a press conference they gave in common, both seemed confident that after the by-election of December 10 they would be in a position to form a coalition government. NKUMBULA expressed the opinion that WELENSKY's party had already resigned to the unalterable fact that Northern Rhodesia should have an African government, and he stressed his firm determination to maintain the economic contacts between the two Rhodesias. Speaking in the same sense, KAUNDA said in reply to a question that he had no personal grudge against WELENSKY, and that he had even offered him the directorship of the railways of Northern Rhodesia.

Subsequent events did not verify the optimism of the two African leaders. Still before the by-elections WELENSKY sent three ministers of his Cabinet to London to make new efforts to influence BUTLER and other leaders of the British government and to prevent the disintegration of the Federation, as well as to delay the independence of Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland.

And WELENSKY's intrigues were not entirely in vain. True, he could delay the break-up of the Federation for a few months only, but the peoples of Northern Rhodesia had to wait nearly two more years to get rid of the colonial yoke.

<sup>1</sup> See Vol. IV. Chapter XV.

## *Strikes and Riots*

On March 13, 1962, fourteen women members of the U.N.I.P. tried a peculiar new form of demonstration: stripped to the skin and shouting "Freedom!", they rushed into the Lusaka propaganda office of WELENSKY's Federal Party and clamoured for the country's independence and secession from the Federation. The police arrested the women, put some clothes on them and carried them off into the station house. In the jail the women again undressed and continued the naked demonstration.

In April, before the forthcoming federal elections, several bloody clashes occurred between followers of the U.N.I.P. and the African National Congress. In Ndola the incidents resulted in eight dead and over twenty wounded Africans. The bodies of three victims were accompanied to the burial place by two thousand people. In the brawls lasting for four days several people were wounded in Lusaka and also at Fort James, the centre of the tobacco plantations.

## *Miners' Strike in May 1962*

In May the African mine workers went on strike, which lasted twenty days with the participation of about 32,000 workers from nearly all Northern Rhodesian mines. The African Mine Workers' Union demanded a wage rise and a paid leave of thirty days a year. It complained that while 5,000 European miners earned an aggregate yearly pay of £15 million, 37,000 Africans got £6 million only. During the strike the police arrested over fifty African workers. The European miners, who were forbidden by law to strike, supported the wage strike of their African mates by slowing down production.

Each day of strike meant a loss of 2,150 tons of copper and cobalt, and thus the mining companies lost £330,000 (about \$1 million) every day.

The strike ended at last with a compromise between representatives of the mining companies and the mine workers' union.

In August 1962, in the small mining town of Chingola the followers of the U.N.I.P. and the African National Congress clashed again. The police squad sent to the scene arrested 23 Africans.

Work was stopped and higher wages were demanded by the workers of the copper foundry in Ndola in September and by the African mine workers of Rhokana in November and those of the Roan Antelope Copper Mines in December. On December 13, 6,800 African workers went on strike because of the unfair dismissal of one of their mates. Five days later the Ndola copper founders stopped working in token of solidarity with the strikers. In January 1963 the African miners of Nchanga and Chumbula were striking.

## *By-elections in December 1962. Coalition Government*

The December by-elections brought no change. As eight out of the eleven seats still remained undecided, the legislature had only 37 members instead of 45. Since the election law ensured 15 seats in advance to Europeans, and NKUMBULA entered into an election pact with WELENSKY's party, this party had 17 seats, while 14 seats were won by the U.N.I.P. (though polling three quarters of the vote) and 6 by the



party of NKUMBULA. This circumstance compelled KAUNDA to press for the formation of an African coalition government. When the elections were over, KAUNDA and NKUMBULA called on the British Governor and asked for his consent to the formation of a coalition government. At the same time three members of WELENSKY's Federal government were in London and attempted to persuade Secretary of State BUTLER to prevent the emergence of an African government, but these efforts were in vain. On December 14 the coalition government was formed with KAUNDA as Minister of Local Government and NKUMBULA as Minister of Education. The key positions in the government — the departments of agriculture and mining, as well as communications and industry — were filled, in this so-called "African government", by European officials.

#### *The Fight of the Coalition Government for the Dissolution of Federation and the Independence of Northern Rhodesia*

On December 19 BUTLER announced that the British government recognized the right of Nyasaland to withdraw from the Federation. The following day KAUNDA, with reference to this statement by BUTLER, declared in Lusaka that Northern Rhodesia vindicated the same right, all the more as the economic difficulties brought up in objection to the secession of Nyasaland were non-existent in relation to Northern Rhodesia.

On February 1, 1963, KAUNDA attended the Nyasaland liberation festivities. When he arrived at the Salisbury airport on his way home from Blantyre, the Southern Rhodesia security police stopped him from boarding the plane bound for Lusaka and detained him for seven hours.

Early in February the coalition government submitted a motion to the Legislative Council. It was for an appeal to be made to the British government, asking its immediate consent to the withdrawal of Northern Rhodesia from the Central African Federation. On February 14, after six days' heated debate, the Legislative Council adopted the motion by 21 votes to 14.

At the end of March KAUNDA and NKUMBULA went to London to talk again with BUTLER. On the ground that it was decided that Nyasaland would secede from the Federation and become independent,<sup>1</sup> they demanded the immediate dissolution of the Federation and the drafting of a new constitution for Northern Rhodesia. BUTLER's response this time was encouraging.

After KAUNDA had returned to Nyasaland, the United National Independence Party on April 7 organized a big rally in Lusaka, where KAUNDA reported on his London talks. The Africans received with enthusiasm the news of the promised secession from the Federation. Before the meeting was opened, the attendance there buried a huge coffin bearing the inscription "Federation". KAUNDA in his speech demanded that the Northern Rhodesia troops which were under the command of WELENSKY's federal government be immediately placed under the African government of Northern Rhodesia, and stressed that the powers of the federal departments dealing with the affairs of Northern Rhodesia should be handed over to the African government.

In May KAUNDA again went to London to confer with BUTLER.

On June 24, 1963, KAUNDA urged Governor HONE to prepare the final text of a draft constitution. At the same time he gave a news conference at which he made it

<sup>1</sup> Nyasaland was granted self-government on February 1.

known that the United National Independence Party and its coalition partner, the African National Congress, had come to a complete agreement.

Despite the co-operation of the two party leaders, clashes between members of the two African parties did not stop. A battle, which lasted two days in the vicinity of Kitwe early in June, resulted in eight dead and several injured. A similar clash occurred on June 17 in the village of Chingolo in the Nchanga mining area, where the police used tear gas to stop the brawl. When this proved ineffectual, they fired a volley. The toll was put at several killed and twenty seriously wounded.

In August 1963 the United National Independence Party won a new major success, this time in Barotseland, where it gained all 25 elective seats on the National Council at the first elections held on the basis of universal suffrage.

In the meantime the negotiations about the new constitution went on between representatives of the British government and the party leaders of Northern Rhodesia (KAUNDA, NKUMBULA, and JOHN ROBERTS, leader of a white liberal opposition group named the National Progress Party). Though no promulgation of any new constitution followed, yet on September 4, 1963, the colonial administration made public that in January 1964 parliamentary elections would be held in Northern Rhodesia on the basis of universal suffrage, with only a few seats being reserved for the European settlers, and promised that after the elections the country would receive a responsible government and internal self-government.

After that, in October 1963, the police reported new clashes of Africans, this time between members of the U.N.I.P. and followers of the Lumpa sect, in the Luangwa Valley in the eastern part of the country. The clashes, which lasted four days running, left six dead and more than thirty injured.

Towards the end of December similar fightings broke out in the district of Chin-sali, in the north of the country, and demanded a toll of four dead and twenty injured Africans.

#### *Elections in January 1964*

During its eighteenth session the UN General Assembly discussed the July 1963 report of the Special Committee and, in its resolution adopted on the recommendation of the Committee, noted with satisfaction that the legislative elections under the new Constitution would be held in January 1964, expressed the hope that the territory would achieve independence in the nearest possible future, and requested the British government, in consultation with the newly elected government of Northern Rhodesia, to fix the date for accession to independence.

The elections took place on January 20-21, 1964, and resulted in a sweeping victory of KAUNDA's United National Independence Party, which won 55 seats, while NKUMBULA's African National Congress and the white settlers' National Progress Party each obtained 10 seats.

On the day following the elections KAUNDA was installed as first Prime Minister of Northern Rhodesia, and the next day there was formed the country's first All-African government with 13 members.

#### *The Provisional Government (January to April 1964)*

In the first four months of 1964 the provisional government concentrated its attention, in addition to the current tasks of domestic policy, on the preparations for the final talks on Northern Rhodesian independence to take place in London in



May, and on the arrangements for establishing future external relations. Its pre-occupations, besides trying to do away with the inter-party differences, concerned the elimination of racial discrimination and the enforcement of respect for democratic liberties. In this endeavour the government was given much trouble by the African National Congress, NKUMBULA's opposition party, which continued to demand new elections prior to independence. This was of course opposed by KAUNDA's party, which had won a sweeping victory at the recent elections. NKUMBULA's supporters tried to prevail upon the government by committing attempts on the life of one or another member of the majority party. It was for such an armed assault causing grievous bodily harm that on March 12 the Broken Hill court sentenced EDWARD LISO, the second parliamentary leader of the A.N.C., to ten months in prison.

But the government was not deterred from its political line by such attempts of the opposition either.

During the first few months of 1964 altogether 806 political prisoners were given amnesty and released, among them several members of the opposition party, the A.N.C.

One of the main concerns of the government was the democratization of public education by providing appropriate school facilities for Africans. In January 1964, at the start of the new half-year term, the integration of schools was carried out. Schools which had until then been accessible only to the children of Europeans, opened their doors to African children. But this reform which was so important politically brought little result from the practical point of view, because only few African parents could afford to pay the high tuition required by European-operated schools. Before that there were separate schools for Europeans and Africans, but tuition in the African schools was free.

KAUNDA and his government were much preoccupied with the problem of qualified personnel needed by the state machinery of the future independent country. It could be predicted that after independence some of the British officials would leave the country, while only few Africans had the necessary higher qualifications. The country badly needed capable doctors, lawyers, teachers and chiefly technicians and building engineers. For lack of establishments of higher education in the country, the first task was to enable as many Northern Rhodesian students as possible to get higher professional qualifications in advanced countries of East and West. (Until then such facilities had been available only in the United States, but not in the field of the most important technical sciences.)

Characteristic of the atmosphere created by the provisional government was that in early March the African railway workers' union organized a political strike. The strike was intended to be a demonstration against European railwaymen, who, still in the spirit of racial prejudice, treated their African colleagues in a humiliating manner and often even manhandled them. All African workers rallied as one man to the call of their union. All over the country the strike was joined in by about 6,000 railwaymen from Lusaka, Livingstone and Broken Hill.

In April representatives of the Northern Rhodesian government and plenipotentiaries of Barotse King MWANAWINA LEWANIKA, after a week-long negotiation, announced in a joint communiqué that their two countries wished to win independence as a unitary state. (By the terms of a treaty of 1890 between Britain and LEWANIKA's predecessor of the same name, Barotseland had so far been a separate British Protectorate within the boundaries of Northern Rhodesia.)

During preparations for the May conference the KAUNDA government was occupied mainly with the following three problems.

At a press conference given in Lusaka on February 28 KAUNDA announced that at the London conference in May he would insist that his country should be proclaimed independent on October 24, United Nations Day, which was also the date of the tenth anniversary of the foundation of his party, and that he would protest against the constitutional provision reserving ten parliamentary seats for Europeans. The second concern was the fact that £88 million out of the state debts of the Federation was passed to the debit of Northern Rhodesia, and the government found the sum too high and the distribution inequitable. It had therefore decided to request British aid for the payment of the debt. The third pressing problem was the settlement of the affairs of the British South Africa Company. This corporation of veritable robbers, which by the grace of Queen VICTORIA was making a yearly profit of £8 million by leasing out the mineral rights of the country, had thus pocketed more than £170 million in seventy years, without contributing to production, merely by collecting mining duties. Part of this amount had been paid out as dividends, and the rest was invested in production abroad (in South Africa and Canada). Thus the government found it absolutely imperative to expropriate this company and was prepared to be confronted with exorbitant demands of the company when the issue of compensation would come up.

Though Britain, when granting self-government, retained the powers over external affairs, the provisional government found some business to do in this field, too.

In February 1964 Prime Minister KAUNDA offered the South African government to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries and to exchange envoys. He did this out of the consideration that, before joining the independent African countries demanding economic sanctions against the Republic of South Africa and supporting the oppressed South African people's aspirations for freedom, he would first try to pierce the armour of the rigid policy of apartheid with the weapons of peaceful approach. The racist government rejected the offer on the hypocritical ground that Northern Rhodesia was not an independent state and diplomatic relations could be established only between independent states. (As is well known, South Africa maintained diplomatic relations with none of the newly independent states of Asia and Africa.)

Unlike the Republic of South Africa, a growing number of African, Asian and European countries took an interest in Northern Rhodesia on the eve of independence. Of the African countries, first of all Ghana, Tanganyika, Congo-Léopoldville and the United Arab Republic were already preparing to establish relations with her. In the early months of 1964 representatives from France, West Germany, Italy, Japan and Yugoslavia visited the country, and a journalist came from the Soviet Union. The United Nations set up its Central and East African regional office in Lusaka, and a personal representative of Secretary-General U THANT also stayed there. A number of international organizations, which had been denied entry into South Africa, South West Africa, Angola and Mozambique, requested and received permission to open their offices in Lusaka.

KAUNDA's government pursued neutral external policy, holding to the principle of political non-alignment. However, it considered it also its duty to give every assistance it could to the independence struggle of the fraternal African peoples still living in colonial subjection.

South African refugees often stopped in Lusaka on their way to independent African countries. The provisional government worked out a plan to convene an international conference, with the participation of the United Nations and other



international organizations, to discuss the problem of refugee camps to be established for South African refugees.

Early in April KAUNDA flew to Nairobi, where he had talks with political leaders of Kenya, Uganda and Tanganyika to co-ordinate the fraternal assistance to be provided to the Southern Rhodesian independence movement which was in a critical position. (The crisis was due to a split in the movement, provoked by the fact that the racist government of FIELD brought a mounting pressure to bear on the British government to proclaim the independence of the Federation under the settlers' rule and to keep the African population in a state of total dispossession.)

#### *The London Agreement of May 1964*

The constitutional conference held in London from May 5 to 19, 1964, worked out an agreement, under which Northern Rhodesia should become the sovereign state of Zambia by October 24, 1964.

According to the new constitution, Zambia is an independent republic headed by the President. Presidential elections have to take place every time after the dissolution of parliament, simultaneously with the election of the 75-member unicameral legislature. The President is also Commander-in-Chief and Chairman of the Council of Ministers, which is composed of the Chairman, a Vice-Chairman and at most 14 ministers.

As concerns the first President of the new state, the conference decided that the existing legislature should elect him by secret ballot still before October 24. Since KENNETH KAUNDA alone stood as a candidate before the fixed date, the Lusaka parliament on August 25 declared him to be President-elect of the independent Republic of Zambia.

During the first six months of 1964 the KAUNDA government had amnestied political prisoners on several occasions. At the end of June another 174 detainees were released, among them 40 members of the African National Congress. The total number of those given pardon in the first half of the year thus was 650; it can be said that practically all the persons sentenced to prison or detained for political activities were set free.

In August the government had much trouble with the European railwaymen's strike which paralyzed rail transport in the country for 16 days. KAUNDA took strong action to put down the strike. The wage problem was ultimately settled between the trade union and the railway directorate.

#### *The Mine Dispute*

The British South Africa Company was aware that it would have to relinquish its "rights" obtained by CECIL RHODES' shrewd methods. Therefore, already in February 1964 it offered the Northern Rhodesian government to start negotiations for the transfer of mineral rights against compensation. Talks took place in May between representatives of the company and the government. But when an inquiry conducted by historians and legal experts during summer established that the claim of the company was groundless because its entire activity was unlawful, KAUNDA changed his mind.

Minister of Finance WINA told parliament in Lusaka on August 20 that according to experts the company was not and had never been entitled to collect mining duties. And early in September KAUNDA sent a letter to the British Prime Minister,

DOUGLAS-HOME, informing him that a legal inquiry made by leading British experts had found that the British government had had no legal right to cede the mineral resources of Northern Rhodesia to a private company. Consequently, the treaty and all the transactions based upon it were legally null and void. The British South Africa Company had no right to collect mining duties.

KAUNDA stated that Northern Rhodesia, with accession to independence on October 24, would claim unlimited rights to her copper mines and demand also that the British South Africa Company pay the Zambian state treasury the unlawfully collected duties to the tune of £170 million. He outlined also the measures he would take in case Zambia's claims were not satisfied.

Finance Minister WINA went to London to talk over the details with the British government. Since KAUNDA's letter to DOUGLAS-HOME remained without reply, the Northern Rhodesian government issued a White Paper on September 21, explaining that the company could not have exercised the mineral rights under the 1890 treaty concluded with African chiefs, since the existence of copper deposits had been unknown at the time, and that the agreements of 1923 and 1950 were not binding upon the independent state of Zambia, because they had been concluded between the British Colonial Office and a Northern Rhodesian government in which Africans had not been represented. From this it would follow that it was a moral duty of the British government as a party to the treaty to settle the case with the company still before Zambian independence.

The British government still backed the company and tried to help it to retain its illicit profits, the millions stolen from the Africans. On September 29 the Commonwealth Office released a statement expressing the hope that the Northern Rhodesian government, "to save its reputation and credit", would reach a peacefully negotiated agreement with the company for the transfer of the mineral rights against compensation.

His talks in London having thus failed, WINA declared categorically that his government was ready to accept and fulfil all obligations of Northern Rhodesia, except those which were to be considered groundless already before the birth of independent Zambia. In his opinion, the government had to make clear the claims of this kind still before independence, and the only such claim to be made clear was the issue of mineral rights. Before leaving for Lusaka the Finance Minister informed the shareholders of the British South Africa Company that they would lose the mineral rights in Northern Rhodesia without compensation, because the government of Zambia would pay no indemnity.

KAUNDA, as a sensible man of political realism, took a more flexible stand. He was aware that law and justice demanded that the company should pay Zambia the unlawfully pocketed £170 million and give up the further exercise of the usurped rights without compensation. At the same time, considering the actual position of the country, he found it absolutely necessary to settle the problem, even at the cost of sacrifices if need be, by peaceful negotiations before independence, lest the capitalists of advanced western countries should be discouraged from helping to promote economic and financial contacts with the young independent state. Therefore he stated his readiness to pay even a certain amount of compensation (ranging from £1.5 million to £2.5 million). But the company, claiming that the "treaty" would expire only 22 years later, demanded a compensation of at least £18 million.

Under such circumstances, after WINA had suspended his talks in London, KAUNDA immediately gave instructions to prepare a bill for a referendum on the nationalization of mineral rights in Zambia.



Barely three months before independence Northern Rhodesia became the scene of unprecedented bloody riots. A veritable war of religion was unleashed in the north by the Lumpa sect under the self-made prophetess ALICE LENSINA.

The carnage was provoked by minor tribal conflicts. The fanatical sect leader incited her followers with religious slogans to take up arms against Africans who refused to join the sect and to fight the official authorities. Fanatical bands armed with arrows, spears and battle-axes assaulted dwelling houses and shops, police stations and other public buildings, killed people by the hundred, not sparing women and children either, set fire to whole villages and slew those who tried to flee from the burning houses.

The fighting gangs offered fierce resistance to the police and troops sent against them, because their prophetess had made them believe that they were impervious to bullets, and they would go to Paradise all the same. She even provided them with "passes" to heaven — papers signed by religious leaders of the sect.

The riots started towards the end of July in the Chinsali district of the Northern Province, where members of the sect killed 120 people. The government dispatched troops to the area and called the sect members to surrender. Since the call was to no avail, the troops used weapons against the rebels. Sixty-eight members of the sect were killed in the battle, and over 350 persons (women and young people among them) were arrested.

When the riots started KAUNDA and Governor HONE went to the place to see for themselves. Speaking in the Lusaka parliament on July 30, KAUNDA called the riots a "national tragedy" and appealed to the followers of the prophetess to surrender. He repeated his appeal over the radio.

At a mass meeting of thousands of people on August 2 KAUNDA talked of the events of the previous week and said that new disturbances had erupted, this time in the Lundazi district of the Eastern Province, where 150 people had been slain, most of them burnt alive. He related that the fanatics locked women and children in the houses and set fire to the buildings — several villages were in flames. Thus far thousands of people had fled from Lundazi. He made known that the government had dispatched troops to the Lundazi district and ordered them to take the sect leader, the prophetess ALICE LENSINA, "dead or alive", to Lusaka.

He called upon the population to refrain from violence against members of the Lumpa religion which had many followers in the northern towns of the country, and to leave the matter to the government. He said that the government had banned the sect where the occurrences had taken place, but the ban did not apply to the religion. "My government has no objection against the Lumpa religion as such", he stated. "But the events of the past week in the Chinsali district, and those of the last 24 hours in Lundazi, have convinced me that the activities of certain Lumpa sects are incompatible with the maintenance of law and order." He added that he hoped to lift the ban in a month if law and order was restored.

The riots flared up again a few days after. Two major clashes took place, one south of Chinsali, the other in the village of Chipoma north of Lundazi. Ninety fighters of the sect were killed and several others wounded. The total death toll thus rose to 360.

In the Lumpa-inhabited villages the authorities had airplanes drop leaflets calling upon the population to keep calm, and sent officials of the administration to talk with the chiefs and lesser tribal headmen. Inhabitants of the Lumpa villages who had not

participated in the riots did not put up resistance to the officials but, for fear of revenge from the rioters, refused to co-operate with the authorities.

According to an official report of August 11, the casualties up to date amounted to 491 dead and 344 wounded. Also hundreds of arrests were made.

On August 12 ALICE LENSINA surrendered to the government troops and, on the demand of the government, appealed to her followers to stop fighting and give themselves up. The leaflets containing the appeal were dropped by helicopters among the rebellious tribes, but these ignored the peace appeal and assembled in the Chinsali district to wait for the approaching full moon (August 23), when according to a plan made by the prophetess they intended to launch a new attack on the troops sent against them. But there was no attack, and the rebels retreated by groups to hidden camps in the jungle. In the villages destroyed by the rebels in the Chinsali district nearly 3,000 people remained without food and shelter. Many of them, children in the first place, contracted pneumonia from starvation and exposure. The government rushed to their aid with supplies of blankets, food and medicine.

Remnants of the sect, however, continued the fight. On August 26 government troops liquidated a camp sheltering 400 rebels. The troops captured 50 members of the sect and lots of weapons (firearms, battle-axes and spears). The rest of the rebels fled to the jungle. The troops set free some of the captives and told them to go after their companions and persuade them to come back. On September 4 the troops discovered another camp of several hundred rebels. Since these refused to surrender, it came to a battle in which the troops lost two men. Data on the rebels' casualties are not available. On October 12 another battle was reported to have taken place in the Luangwa Valley, where 60 sect members were killed and another 20 wounded.

The difficulties of the months preceding independence were coupled with another calamity. From the beginning of 1964 an epidemic of smallpox had been ravaging Northern Rhodesia, taking a toll of 142 lives in the first half of the year. By early August another 1,500 cases were reported, and the plague spread rapidly. Protection against the epidemic was made difficult by the fact that the primitive rural population refused to co-operate with the health workers.

The bloody events on the eve of independence and the difficulties in combating the smallpox epidemic clearly showed how great tasks were ahead of the government of the nascent independent state: the heritage of the past must be liquidated and the backward masses must be led out of the darkness of ignorance to the road of progress.

KAUNDA's definite stand and self-confident, but at the same time wise and moderate, action against the rebels were also proof that the government of the young independent state would be in the hands of a capable leader.

#### *Accession to Independence*

The last official act of the British government was that on October 20 it put into force Northern Rhodesia's constitution adopted in May. Accordingly, the country would become the independent Republic of Zambia on October 24, and take over all obligations of Northern Rhodesia as provided by article 17 of the constitution.

KAUNDA had already prepared his formal protest to the British government announcing the intention of the government of Zambia to amend the constitution by way of a referendum, to abrogate article 17. But as he was informed that BOTTOMLEY had been appointed Commonwealth Secretary, KAUNDA decided to back



down and not to protest — in the hope of a peaceful settlement. BOTTOMLEY, who before the elections had followed the dispute with great interest and was accurately informed about the views of the KAUNDA government, was preparing to fly to Lusaka to represent the British government at the independence celebration of Zambia. KAUNDA expected to have opportunity for friendly talks and a settlement of the copper dispute.

British public opinion definitely wanted a peaceful settlement, because a referendum would of necessity be accompanied by violent outbursts against Great Britain, while London deemed it advisable to maintain friendship and to ensure the KAUNDA government's good will towards Britain.

A leading article in *The Times* pointed to the City's feelings about the false titles of the British South Africa Company and warned against adopting a position hostile to the developing countries. The *Glasgow Herald* wrote that the action of the DOUGLAS-HOME government had been a result of pressure from the influential Anglo-American financial group having big interests in the British South Africa Company.

KAUNDA's expectations came true. His talks with Commonwealth Secretary BOTTOMLEY produced results. A few hours before the proclamation of independence an agreement was arrived at between the British government and the British South Africa Company, by which all mineral rights in Zambia would be exercised by the Zambian government.

This agreement was a result of compromise made possible by KAUNDA's sensible and realistic approach: for the sake of peace the government of Zambia paid the British South Africa Company a compensation of £2 million.

On September 24, that is, a month before the country became independent, KAUNDA announced at a press conference that after independence the post of Vice-President (and Vice-Premier) would be filled by REUBEN KAMANGA, who had until then been Deputy Premier and Minister of Transport and Communications, while SIMON KAPWEPWE, actually Minister of Home Affairs, would take over the Foreign Ministry, and that he would take into his government two Ministers of State, who should be in charge of defence and security affairs and civil matters, respectively.

On October 2 Prime Minister KAUNDA announced that Zambia, after accession to independence, would recognize the People's Republic of China and the Federal Republic of Germany.

On October 24 Northern Rhodesia acceded to independence and became the sovereign Republic of Zambia. In his speech at the ceremony KAUNDA set forth the agricultural, industrial, cultural and health programme of the government of the newly independent state.

The next day KAUNDA took the oath of office as head of state of Zambia and made public the composition of his cabinet (with all the changes announced a month earlier).

The independence festivities were marred by a rude provocation on the part of Southern Rhodesia. Some of the foreign guests left for an excursion to Lake Victoria. When their bus reached the boundary line, the Southern Rhodesian frontier guards forced the passengers to get off and started a special passport inspection. The passengers were brought into line, white and black apart. After this incident the guests gave up continuing the excursion and returned to Lusaka.

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## NYASALAND

*Introduction*

Of Nyasaland the propaganda of British imperialism drew an incongruous, idealized picture. Wanton lies were propagated saying that "about the turn of the century, it is probably true to say that Nyasaland had undergone a swifter transformation and had achieved greater stability as an entity than either of her neighbours with whom she is now joined in federation,"<sup>1</sup> as we read in the government's *Nyasaland Report 1957*. And with regard to the post-World War II period the same report states that "development has been rapid, and both the economic and social structure of the country has been radically affected . . . substantial loans have been floated, a markedly increased measure of Colonial Development and Welfare Fund assistance has been received and considerable capital investment has taken place on private account. Communications have been very greatly improved, and basic public utilities provided at all the main centres."<sup>2</sup>

With reference to the 60th anniversary of the Protectorate the report alleges that "notable advances . . . had taken place during 60 years of comparatively peaceful and prosperous British rule. Considering the social and economic conditions which prevailed towards the end of the nineteenth century, the growth of peace and prosperity, the establishment of law and order, the evolution of a political and social consciousness, together with the maintenance of inter-racial harmony, amount to a considerable achievement in so short a space of time." (*Nyasaland Report 1957*, p. 146.)<sup>3</sup>

Liberal opponents of federation spread the same lie. A typical example is provided by CLUTTON-BROCK, who, in his book caustically critical of federation, uses vivid colours to paint the destitution of the African population, writing this about the past of the territory: "The history of Nyasaland had thus been one of progress since its earliest years and, according to official reports, of rapid development since 1948. It was a country moving slowly but steadily forward through the energies of the people and of the Protectorate Government. There was no hint of stagnation nor of insoluble problems . . . Until 1953, when Federation was imposed, the country was peaceful and pleasant and human relations between people and government were based on mutual understanding, respect, confidence and often friendship . . . The country was happy, and those of all races who lived there had a pride in the sound relationships existing between all its inhabitants."<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Quoted by GUY CLUTTON-BROCK, *Dawn in Nyasaland*, London, 1959, p. 29.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 30.

<sup>4</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 31.



Discussion of the preceding periods has shown how false this evaluation of Nyasaland's past is. What colonialism brought the farming population of the territory was intense land hunger and ruthless exploitation. While the white planters were waxing rich, thousands of African farmers were ruined and had to hire themselves out for seasonal labour in neighbouring colonies. This was the reason why sectarian movements gained ground already before World War I and the Chilembwe revolt broke out in 1915. The beginnings of a conscious, organized independence movement can be traced back to the year 1912, which witnessed the birth of the first major African mass movement of liberation in the Union of South Africa — the African National Congress.<sup>1</sup>

During the war there was formed the illegal Nyasaland National Congress, which for three decades was to remain an exclusive group of revolutionary-minded semi-proletarians who earlier had been to the Union, and which was unable to mobilize the masses under the severe colonial regime. When, after World War II, the agricultural population stirred and was showing overt discontent, the British administration allowed them to operate legally in order to have better control over their activities. The conditions of the masses did not improve after the war either, but the long-oppressed and weakened farming population did not budge for a while. It was only the danger in 1952–53 of being forced into federation and thereby under the rule of the racist Southern Rhodesia settlers, whose regime would have been still more oppressive than British colonial domination, that led broad masses to get active. The action which had thus started, first to prevent the imposition of federation, then to liquidate it and finally to secede from it, meant to the peoples of Nyasaland a struggle against colonial oppression and exploitation, the birth of a revolutionary national movement of independence.

### *The Struggle of the Nyasaland Peoples against Federation*

From the time when, in 1938, the BLEDISLOE Commission made the first concrete recommendation for an amalgamation of Nyasaland with Southern Rhodesia, the chiefs, leading politicians and the entire people of Nyasaland rose most categorically against any form of federation. They all were aware that this union would bring with it the extension to Nyasaland of the policies of racial discrimination and segregation.

The movement of the Nyasaland peoples soared especially high in 1952 when the pro-Federation propaganda of the British government and the white settlers reached its peak in all three territories.

In January 1952 *The African Weekly* published a letter by MWASE, one of the most influential Nyasaland chiefs. Though he was known to be an ardent supporter of co-operation with the administration, Chief MWASE wrote in this letter among other things:

"Be kind enough to give me a space in your paper, so that I can say a few words about Federation of the Rhodesias and Nyasaland. I have kept myself up to date in reading the newspapers and it is clear that everybody does not follow what was said at the Victoria Falls Conference. I deny that there was a delegate from Nyasaland, European or African, who agreed to Federation . . . Nyasaland knows that if

she agrees to Federation, then she has deprived herself of self-determination . . . I have no doubt that if we accept Federation our children will blame us . . . We refused partnership at the Conference because we did not have a mandate from the people of Nyasaland and what we had been instructed to say by the Provincial and Protectorate Councils. Both Africans and Europeans stood together. We have a hope of attaining self-government in Nyasaland under the guidance of the Colonial Office. But if we federate with Southern Rhodesia, then our freedom would be gone. We shall have no power over our country and our people . . . We do not like to be forced into Federation. We do not want to lose our liberty which Queen Victoria gave us. Let us stand for our children's liberty."<sup>1</sup>

In February 1952 the administration convened the African Protectorate Council composed mainly of chiefs who represented on the highest level the African population of the Protectorate, and called upon this body to discuss and accept the proposal for Federation. After a serious discussion the Council wrote to the British Colonial Secretary a memorandum stating among other things:

"This Council has read very carefully the suggestions contained in the White Paper 8233 upon Federation of the three Central African territories and finds that it cannot accept the scheme for the following reasons:

" . . . the Protectorate status would be endangered by accepting Federation. Discriminatory laws have been passed in the Union of South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. These have not been vetoed by H.M. Government, and the African people concerned are yoked under these laws, a fact of which H.M. Government is fully aware.

"We believe that an assurance was given in 1891 by Queen Victoria that Nyasaland was declared a Protectorate on the understanding that it would inevitably attain self-government by the Africans, and this opportunity is eagerly awaited by Africans in Nyasaland.

"We confidently expect that Nyasaland Africans will be led to ultimate responsible self-government by Africans . . ."<sup>2</sup>

In April 1952 the peoples of Nyasaland (as well as Northern Rhodesia) sent a delegation of chiefs and other leading politicians to London to protest against the federal scheme. The delegation included members of the Legislative Council, the Protectorate Council, and leaders of the African National Congress. The delegate "sent by our people to re-affirm to Her Majesty's Government our unanimous opposition to Federation", as they wrote in a letter to *The Times*, declared:

"We oppose Central African Federation on principle on the following grounds. We fear the extension to Northern Rhodesia and Nyasaland of the native policy of Southern Rhodesia if the three territories are federated. History has shown that that has happened in the Union of South Africa where the Boer policy has supplanted the liberal British policy of Cape Colony completely. The native policy of Southern Rhodesia approximates more closely to native policy in the Union of South Africa than to native policy in any British African territory . . . Union native policy is already firmly established in Southern Rhodesia . . . The European minority in the three territories has striven for 25 years to create an amalgamation or a federation of the three territories in order to gain Dominion status and throw off Colonial Office control . . . We have no faith in professed safeguards for African interests.

<sup>1</sup> See E. SÍK, *The History of Black Africa*, Vol. II, pp. 525, 549.

<sup>1</sup> CLUTTON-BROCK, *op. cit.*, pp. 46–47.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 47.



The Constitutions of the Union of South Africa and of Southern Rhodesia have proved that they are valueless."<sup>1</sup>

The presidents of the Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia African National Congresses (as members of the delegation) said in a press interview before leaving London:

"We talk as a united people. This is the first time that traditional leaders, Chiefs and others are completely united with nationalist political leaders in Africa. The Government, which generally has the support of all Chiefs for its policies, has not yet managed to get the support of a single Chief for Federation . . .

"Britain should avoid putting herself in a similar position to the Union Government. This would mark the beginning of the end of British influence. Nobody would regret this more than the Africans . . .

"We want Europeans in our countries provided they accept our national aspirations and treat us as human beings. That is all we ask."<sup>2</sup>

The *Manchester Guardian* commented on this interview as follows:

"Nothing they have seen here has shaken the Central African delegates, either unofficial or official, in their opposition to Federation. They reject the suggestion that the idea behind the Federation is economic and repeat that it is political or racial. They say that whatever economic benefits there might be from a closer working together of Nyasaland and Northern and Southern Rhodesia, the benefits would not be shared by the Africans. The presence at a press conference to-day of both unofficial and official delegates was typical of the solidarity with which the Africans have opposed the Federal proposals during the Conference here."<sup>3</sup>

In 1953, shortly before the imposition of Federation, the Nyasaland chiefs presented a petition to the British government and the United Nations at the same time, explaining their reasons in these terms:

"From our understanding of Article 73 of the United Nations Charter we believe that it would be contrary to the trust accepted through the treaties with our Chiefs, and ratified by the United Nations Charter, for the United Kingdom Government to transfer its sovereignty and responsibilities in whole or in part to any other body or persons, or to give up any part of its responsibilities towards the inhabitants of the Protectorate: this would apply especially to the responsibilities of the Government of the United Kingdom in connection with the political, social and educational development and aspirations of the people, their just treatment and protection from abuses, and their development towards self-government.

"It is our belief that the progress of the African people in these directions would be retarded and obstructed by the proposed Federation and the reinforcement of colour barriers which already exist in the political, economic and social spheres, especially in Southern and Northern Rhodesia . . .

"We believe that if the proposed Federal Scheme for Central Africa were imposed on us the powers and responsibilities of Her Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom towards us and our economic, social and political aspirations and interests would be vitally and adversely affected, as indeed would be the mutual good faith that has existed between Britain and the African people of Nyasaland. It would be prejudicial to good relations between ourselves and those in Central Africa who seek to bring about this Federation despite our declared wishes, and, whilst claiming us as their 'partners' in it, relegate us to a position of subordination to themselves.

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 48.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

"We petition the United Nations, and ask Her Majesty's Government to support us in this . . . We ask whether it would be compatible with international law for people who have voluntarily placed themselves under the protection of the Government of the United Kingdom to be handed over, regardless of their views and expressed wishes, to the jurisdiction of another Government; and for territories which are Protectorates and sacred trusts to be handed over by the Protecting and Administering Government to another Government's jurisdiction whether in whole or in part."<sup>1</sup>

As we have seen above, all this was no use, the Federation was imposed despite the opposition of the entire population of Nyasaland (and Northern Rhodesia).

Characteristic of the unanimous anti-Federal stand of the Nyasaland chiefs were the stories of two highly respected chiefs, MAGANA and GOMANI.

N. A. MAGANA was born in 1885. At the age of ten he was captured by a slave trader and taken to Dar es Salaam. There he was sold into slavery to a rich Swahili family. In 1914, after the outbreak of World War I, the Germans released him and recruited him in the "native troops" of LETTOW-VORBECK. After the British took him prisoner, in the second stage of the war he fought with the British against the Germans. In 1922 he returned to Nyasaland, where he became a Yao chief and loyally served the British colonial authorities over thirty years. On the other hand, in 1953, he was one of the Nyasaland leaders who went to London to protest against Federation.<sup>2</sup>

PHILIP GOMANI, as Paramount Chief of the Angoni tribe, had served faithfully the British colonialists for thirty-two years. Thousands of his tribesmen had been drafted into the British armed forces in both world wars. In the early fifties, like the other chiefs, GOMANI also stood against Federation. He incited his people to passive resistance but warned them against using violence. In common with eighty-two other chiefs he signed the petition addressed to the British government and the United Nations. Thereupon, in the absence of GOMANI (who was ill in hospital), the District Commissioner announced that the Federation had already been decided and even given the royal assent (which was untrue, since the British Parliament had not yet made its decision). GOMANI encouraged his people to continue resisting. The authorities tried to persuade him to call off his appeal to the people. When he still refused, they suspended him and transferred his functions of "Native Authority" to the District Commissioner, and ordered GOMANI to leave the district in twenty-four hours. As he failed to follow the order, a mobile police squad was sent to arrest him at his home, where many of his tribesmen, concerned over the health of their leader just back from hospital, had gathered from the surrounding places. GOMANI put up no resistance, but his men protested and asked the police to arrest them in place of their sick chief. Then the police seized GOMANI, took him out and hustled him into a police car while attacking the people with tear gas. However, the crowd which was blocking the way stopped the car, freed the chief and vanished with him in the woods. GOMANI was first hidden in a nearby village, and later a group of Angoni took him across the frontier into Mozambique. But the Portuguese authorities deported the chief back to Nyasaland. While awaiting trial, he was admitted to a hospital and died there soon after.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Communication from 83 Chiefs of Nyasaland to the Secretary-General of the United Nations (26/4/53) and to the Chairman of the Fourth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly (15/10/53). Quoted from CLUTTON-BROCK, *op. cit.*, pp. 49-50.

<sup>2</sup> J. GUNTHER, *Inside Africa*, pp. 640-641.

<sup>3</sup> For details, see the pamphlet *African Episode* (Africa Bureau, London) by MICHAEL SCOTT and his book *Time to Speak*, London, 1958, pp. 281-284.



The creation of the Federation confronted Nyasaland with serious economic and political consequences, largely due to the fact that the leading role in the federal government in charge of the political and economic affairs of the three territories of the Federation was played by the racist settlers of Southern Rhodesia.

Economically, Nyasaland was placed in a disadvantageous position. Before federation the territory had its finances in better shape than Southern Rhodesia (whose public debts in 1954 amounted to £133 million as against Nyasaland's debts of only £6 million),<sup>1</sup> and within the Federation it was the least favoured of all: while the government of Southern Rhodesia settlers spent all available funds on the economic development of Southern Rhodesia in the first place, and Northern Rhodesia rich in mineral resources in the second place, Nyasaland received hardly anything.

The principal apologists of federation made it appear that the Southern Rhodesia investments did much good to the Nyasaland peasants, too, since they provided them with job opportunities and new sources of income.<sup>2</sup>

In fact, however, what the openings in Southern Rhodesia meant to the Nyasaland peasants was the increasing hired labour employed abroad (a place of no return for many) and the decline of economic activity in the Nyasaland villages left without male labour. (We have already seen<sup>3</sup> that in the early thirties about one quarter of the male population of Nyasaland, nearly 120,000 people, had steady jobs abroad. In the second half of the fifties this figure rose to two hundred thousand, the overwhelming majority of whom were employed in Southern Rhodesia.<sup>4</sup>) The new job opportunities created by federation did not improve the situation of the Nyasaland peasants, but increased the degree of their exploitation and helplessness.

Still more serious were the political consequences of federation. The Federal government, following the racist policies of the Southern Rhodesia settlers, introduced in Nyasaland, where this policy had not been enforced before federation, a cruel regime of police terror which was directed first to put down every opposition to federation and later to crush the African National Congress. This regime was well described in a statement released in 1958 by the Blantyre synod of the Central African Presbyterian Church:

"The increase in Special Police activities and the widespread employment of police informers, directed against essentially law-abiding people whose only offence is their attitude to Federation, is creating contempt for the law as such . . . School children are questioned concerning their teachers, prominent visitors with known liberal views have been followed round the country, Europeans have been asked to report on the activities of their colleagues, sermons are the subject of special police reports, reputations are maliciously maligned with no possibility of answer or regard for truth, no public meeting can be held without informers or detectives being present . . . Other bitter fruits of Federation are similar restrictions of civil liberties which particularly affect Africans such as the continuance of Emergency Regulations preventing the free association of persons in public meetings without a police permit."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See HAILEY, *op. cit.*, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup> See, e.g., the chapter on "Federation and the Distribution of Economic Benefits" in C. LEYS and C. PRATT, *A New Deal in Central Africa*, London, 1960, pp. 95 and 97.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. II, p. 225.

<sup>4</sup> MASON, *Year of Decision*, London, 1960, pp. 130-131.

<sup>5</sup> CLUTTON-BROCK, *op. cit.*, p. 136.

The fact is that the colonial government itself also did not conceal its intention and called upon the Africans in the most impudent frankness to act as informers. The Nyasaland information bulletin wrote this:

"It is the Government's intention to clean the country of Congress now and to keep it clean always. . . . Do you know of any member of Congress living near you who has not been arrested? Do you know of any group of Congress members near you who are plotting to cause trouble? If you do, you must tell the Boma, so that these wicked people can be arrested and removed from your area. Tell your District Commissioner or your nearest Government Officer the names of any Congress member you know has not yet been arrested. You can either report personally to a Government Officer or, if you prefer to remain anonymous, send an unsigned letter to your District Commissioner or Police Officer, giving the name and address of any Congress member still at large. (There is no need to put a stamp on the letter.)"<sup>19</sup>

It is thus no wonder that the new regime bred distrust and desperation among the Africans. A European settler gave an objective description of the situation as follows:

"In Nyasaland since 1953 . . . the whole atmosphere has changed. People of all races from the top to the bottom of society are aware of it. It is becoming increasingly manifest in outbursts of violence. On the surface life goes on much as usual; beneath it human relations have been bedevilled by 'Federation'. Mutual understanding between Government and people, missionaries and congregations, European and African and often between sections of the African people themselves have been steadily undermined. Respect, confidence and friendship are on the decline. Among African people as a whole, confidence in Europeans as such is ebbing away. 'We have lost faith in Europeans, missionaries, the Protectorate Government and the Government of the United Kingdom. We don't really trust any European now. They say one thing and mean another. Federation is a trick, and we have been betrayed and cheated.' These are no idle remarks by a street-corner agitator, but the frequent considered statements of the most responsible Africans of the land. The loss of confidence is not the result of any 'subversive influence' from outside Nyasaland, nor of 'agitators' within. Nyasaland is attacked by neither."<sup>20</sup>

But the terror regime also revolutionized broad masses of the African population, as was stated in the above-mentioned Presbyterian declaration:

"This Synod is deeply concerned at political developments which have taken place in Nyasaland since Federation . . . There is no gainsaying the Federation . . . has produced a deep and widespread feeling of unrest which is like a poison among the people destroying race relations and leaving bitterness and hate where trust and love prevailed before . . . Fears for future security and political stability have increased and in many cases are proving to be well-founded . . . Unrest . . . is found in every village. The people may not be politically articulate . . . but they see Federation making Nyasaland like Southern Rhodesia or South Africa . . . They do not want that kind of white domination, race segregation and discrimination here. These are the effects of Federation which they feel and see most clearly and all their fears expressed in former years against Federatoin being instituted are being realized."<sup>21</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 147.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 131-132.

<sup>3</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 138-139.



The peoples of Nyasaland intensified and perpetuated the struggle against federation after its imposition. The African National Congress, this true mouthpiece of the will of the people, devoted all its energy to the unrelenting fight for the secession of Nyasaland and for the dissolution of the Federation.

The essence and purposes of this staunch resistance provoked by the imposition of Federation are pertinently described by GUY CLUTTON-BROCK in his afore-cited book:

"The opposition of Congress to Federation is not the result of negativism or isolationism. The Minister of Home Affairs reported in the Federal Assembly that in spite of the Ministry intensifying its campaign to get qualified people to register, only seven out of a possible 7,000 African voters had registered. This was not the result of apathy. Nyasaland has never been more politically active. The opposition of Congress to Federation is the opposition of the people of the country. It is based on their simple and practical objection to Nyasaland, a country destined for self-government, being placed under the predominating political influence of Southern Rhodesia, a conquered and occupied territory being colonized from overseas. It is based on their objection to the native policy of Southern Rhodesia and to the overwhelming influence which Southern Rhodesia must wield under the present Federal Constitution and against which there is no safeguard . . .

"Thus the opposition to Federation of the people, Chiefs and political leaders of Nyasaland is virtually 100% and continues, in every meeting of the Legislative Council, in every political gathering or assembly and wherever people are gathered together. This opposition is corroborated by all authoritative opinion, and the reasons for it were affirmed by every impartial investigation into the possibility of closer association with Southern Rhodesia. No economic argument can overcome the urge of an unprising people for self-determination in these days, and no economic consideration will deter the people of Nyasaland from the pursuit of self-government."<sup>1</sup>

The United Kingdom branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association in 1957 sent a delegation to the Federation. The delegation visited also Nyasaland and stated its impressions in its report as follows:

"We found that the opposition was strongest in Nyasaland. Virtually all those with whom we spoke, whether Chiefs, African members of the Legislatures or leaders of Congress, and leaders of Asian organisations were unanimous in their opposition. To them Federation has become a symbol for the frustrations and dissatisfaction which non-Europeans feel about their status in society. Vocal leaders of African opinion in Nyasaland told us that they were ready to sacrifice the economic and financial advantages that accrued to them from Federation. Indeed, they do not think much of these advantages. They argue that Nyasaland should receive greater financial help from the Federation than she, in fact, does on the grounds that she carries the biggest population and is the poorest of the three territories." (*Parliamentary Delegation Report*, p. 27.)<sup>2</sup>

In 1954, when the British Colonial Secretary was on a visit to Nyasaland, the Nyasaland African National Congress stated in its memorandum presented to the Colonial Secretary: "We reiterate our opposition to the imposition of the Central African Federation against the overwhelming wishes of the African people of this

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, opp. 56-57, 60.

<sup>2</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 59.

country . . . What the people of Nyasaland desire is self-government within the British Commonwealth of Nations."<sup>1</sup>

The ten-year history of Nyasaland under Federation is essentially the history of this resistance movement.

*The "Constitutional Reform" of 1955*

In February 1955 the administration issued a "reform". This contained the following provisions: (a) the legislature (which had until then had ten ex-officio and ten unofficial members in addition to the presiding Governor) was enlarged to include two more members (an ex-officio and an unofficial member); (b) in contrast with the former system, in which the ten unofficial members included 6 Europeans (5 nominated by the settlers' associations and another appointed by the Governor), 3 Africans and 1 Indian nominated by the Protectorate Council, under the "reform" the 11 unofficial seats were divided so that 6 non-Europeans<sup>2</sup> were directly elected and the remaining 5 were still elected indirectly (that is, nominated by the Provincial Council). The composition of the Executive Council was unchanged, it included two European settlers as unofficial members and no African.

Although the "reform" did not change the ratio between ex-officio and unofficial members and still ensured a European majority over the Africans, the settlers and the Federal government found even this meagre reform too much. To the Africans, on the other hand, it brought disillusionment, because — to use CHIRWA's words<sup>3</sup> — it evidenced that London ignored the wishes of the Africans and left them to the mercy of the European minority. The fact that still no seat was given to Africans in the Executive Council was branded by CHIRWA as a direct insult.

The British administration put the reform into force despite the protests of the Africans. It hoped in vain, however, that the Provincial Councils composed overwhelmingly of conservative chiefs would nominate no militant members of the Congress to the Legislative Council: at the March 1956 elections five Congress members were elected to the Legislative Council, among them CHIUME<sup>4</sup> and CHIPEMBERE,<sup>5</sup> who spoke in the legislature to support the policies of the Congress. In the

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*, p. 53.

<sup>2</sup> This provision practically ruled out the possibility for the "Asians" to send representatives to the Legislative Council, since the voting right of non-Africans (meaning Europeans and Asians) was subject to so high financial and educational qualifications that in the 1956 elections only 1,866 out of 6,700 Europeans and 338 out of 8,500 Asians were entitled to vote.

<sup>3</sup> W. M. CHIRWA, a deputy to the Federal Parliament. See below.

<sup>4</sup> MURRAY WILLIAM KANYAMA CHIUME, of the Tumbuku tribe, was born in 1929 in Nkata Bay district. From 1938 he was educated in Tanganyika, first at the Central School in Dar es Salaam, then at the Senior Secondary School in Tabora. From 1949 to 1953 he studied at Makerere College in Uganda, where he founded the Nyasaland Student Association and was president of its political club. Having obtained his teacher's degree in 1953, he taught for a year at Dodoma, Tanganyika, but he had to leave his job because of his political agitation against the establishment of the Central African Federation. In 1955 he returned to Nyasaland and started coffee production in Nkata Bay district. In October of the same year he was elected to the district council and the Northern Provincial Council. He took an active part in the work of the Nyasaland African National Congress.

<sup>5</sup> MASAUKO HENRY BLASIUS CHIPEMBERE, the son of an Anglican minister, was born in 1931 at Fort Johnston in the Southern Province of Nyasaland. He went to secondary school at Blantyre and pursued studies at Fort Hare College in South Africa. After his return home he worked in the colonial administration at Dedza and joined in the political activities of the Nyasaland African National Congress. In 1956 CHIPEMBERE was in extensive correspondence with HASTINGS BANDA and tried to talk him into returning home.



budgetary debate held in July 1956, for example, CHIPEMBERE pointed out that the African population of Nyasaland was unanimously against Federation and further white immigration, and CHIUME demanded that the Africans should have a majority representation in the Executive Council. During a three-day session of the Legislative Council in February 1957 the African representatives proposed that the country withdraw from the Federation and that all the land inhabited by Africans be detached from the settlers' estates and that no permits be issued for the recruitment of workers to be employed abroad. Of course, the settler majority rejected these demands.

In the 1956 federal elections two Congress members, CHIRWA and KUMBIKANO, were elected to the Federal Parliament. At the initiative of CHIPEMBERE and the absent HASTINGS BANDA the African National Congress (which was for the boycott of the Federal Parliament) called upon CHIRWA and KUMBIKANO to resign from the Federal Parliament. Since they refused, the Congress expelled them.

#### *The Role and Defection of T.D.T. Banda<sup>1</sup>*

In 1956 T. D. T. BANDA was elected General Secretary of the Congress. When Colonial Secretary LENNOX-BOYD told the British Parliament that the dissolution of the Federation was out of the question, T. D. T. BANDA reacted in a very sharp tone, whereupon he was fined for "rebellion".

In September 1957 the Congress, on a motion of T. D. T. BANDA, wrote a memorandum to the British Governor, proposing an amendment to the Constitution so that the Nyasaland Legislative Assembly should have an African majority. The memorandum was presented to the Governor by a delegation headed by T. D. T. BANDA.

In November 1957 T. D. T. BANDA was elected President of the Congress. In this post, however, he did not live up to expectations: in contrast to his militant past, he endeavoured to push the Congress in a more moderate direction. This compelled the militant young members of the party (with CHIPEMBERE in the lead) to urge HASTINGS BANDA most insistently to return home. In March 1958 they managed to have the Congress depose T. D. T. BANDA from the presidency. BANDA quit the Congress and on May 4 founded the Congress Liberation Party (C. L. P.) with a mixed programme. On the one hand, he advocated the introduction of universal suffrage, general school education, an end to the "colour bar", and self-government for Nyasaland within the British Commonwealth; on the other hand, he condemned every kind of violence, took a stand for the restoration of the former standing of chiefs and for the inviolability of private property, and called to fight for a new federation, consisting of Nyasaland, Northern Rhodesia and Tanganyika, to supersede the existing Central African Federation. The new party, which was based almost exclusively

<sup>1</sup> THAMAR DILLON THOMAS BANDA, the son of a blacksmith in the Tonga tribe, was born in February 1910 in the Northern Province of Nyasaland (Nkata Bay). He went to mission school at Bandawe and Livingstone. He was a teacher from 1930 to 1940, first at the Bandawe mission school, then in Southern Rhodesia. From 1940 to 1945, still in Southern Rhodesia, he worked as an office clerk, and from 1946 to 1949 he was a school steward. He returned to Nyasaland in 1950, and for a short time he was employed by the Colonial Development Corporation. Later, from April 1951 to 1953, he was a clerk with the Nkata Bay Council of Chiefs, then he was an accountant of the African Lakes Corporation until 1956. From 1952 onwards he displayed political activity in the struggle against the schemes for the federation of Nyasaland and the Rhodesias. He was president of the Chintechi local branch of the Nyasaland African National Congress.

in T. D. T. BANDA's birth-place, the district of Nkata Bay, came to no major role in politics.

On June 13, 1958, HASTINGS BANDA and CHIPEMBERE went in deputation to Colonial Secretary LENNOX-BOYD in London to press for a new Constitution of Nyasaland.

At the Legislative Council meeting of July 1, 1958, representative CHIPEMBERE on behalf of the African National Congress said:

"The Chiefs of this country and their people will go on struggling for liberation from their federal entanglements until their general object of freeing Nyasaland has been achieved, and they will go on struggling for the establishment of a truly representative Government in this country until that object too has been achieved. There will be no surrender, and there will be no going back."<sup>1</sup>

#### *Hastings Banda's Return and Take-over*

On July 6, 1958, HASTINGS BANDA returned to Nyasaland, where he was given a cheering welcome by the people. In an interview given on the occasion he said that the reason why he had come home was that he intended to win self-government for Nyasaland through peaceful negotiations. In the first few days the colonial administration was looking favourably on him, because it expected him to be a moderate leader of the movement, but it drew back from him as soon as he raised his voice against the Federation.

On August 1, 1958, HASTINGS BANDA was elected President of the Congress at its annual meeting, and he took into the leadership two of the most militant party members, CHIUME and CHIPEMBERE.

In the following months he made a tour of the country, carrying on a propaganda campaign in favour of withdrawal from the Federation, and winning large masses for the policies of the Congress. In more than one place it came to clashes between his audience and the police. The meetings where BANDA proposed to speak were often banned.

Since the British government failed to respond to the initiative which the Congress, through its delegation sent to London in June, had made with a view to obtaining a new Constitution, BANDA started negotiations with officials of the local colonial authorities, but to no avail.

In December BANDA attended the conference of African states at Accra. When he returned from Ghana, the proposed mass demonstration to welcome him at the Blantyre airport was banned by the police.

That same month the colonial administration submitted to the Legislative Council a bill intended to give the police large powers to disband meetings and protest marches.

The situation in the country became ever more tense, so much so that this was fully clear even to moderate elements who did not agree with the radical programme of the Congress. CHIRWA, for example, though refusing to comply with the demand of the Congress that he resign from the Federal Parliament, found it better not to attend its meetings. And a European Protestant minister, ANDREW DORG, who had for years been a member of the Federal Parliament for Nyasaland African interests, resigned his seat on the grounds that he could not represent the African interests in a legislature which ignored in advance every demand of the Africans.

<sup>1</sup> CLUTTON-BROCK, *op. cit.*, p. 50.



The Congress judged the critical situation more accurately. CHIPEMBERE even declared: "Anything like moderation will never get us anywhere . . .; the only language which British imperialism can understand is the language of extreme conflict."

#### *The Events in January through March 1959*

Seeing no hope for success through negotiations, the Congress held a special meeting on January 25, 1959, and after discussing the situation, it resolved that the struggle that has already begun for self-government must be continued by all means, violence included.

In the course of January and February 1959 demonstrations took place in several towns. Clashes broke out between the demonstrators and the police called out to disperse them. In Zomba, for instance, 32 women were arrested, whereupon the people proceeded to the prison, directed volleys of rocks at public buildings and cars, and the police had to use stench bombs to break up the crowds. Similar cases occurred in Blantyre, too. On February 21, 1959, at the request of the British Governor of Nyasaland, the federal government dispatched troops from Southern Rhodesia to Nyasaland to put down the "disturbances". That same day HASTINGS BANDA called on the Chief Secretary of the administration and warned him that deployment of the troops would only envenom the situation, but his warning fell on deaf ears.

Since the "disturbances" continued, the Governor threw the troops and police into action against the demonstrators. Arrest followed arrest, which in turn provoked new mass action to free the arrested persons.

On March 3 the administration proclaimed the state of emergency, banned the African National Congress, and ordered 250 leading members and other militants of the Congress arrested.<sup>1</sup>

After the arrest of the Congress leaders the British Colonial Secretary in London said that the Nyasaland authorities had found evidence that the Congress was preparing for a carnage. On March 23 the British government published a White Paper<sup>2</sup> in which it accused the Congress of having planned the assassination of the Governor, the Provincial Commissioners and other high officials of the colonial administration. This slander was then spread by the government press.

Neither the brutalities of police and troops, nor the arrests of the African leaders, nor the campaign of slander could stop the mass movements. The demonstrations went on, the participants — either unarmed or armed with axes, lances or clubs — offered resistance to the police that were armed to the teeth and instructed by the authorities to use their weapons against the people.

The "unrest" spread to many villages, too. To calm-down the "rioting" population, troops on jeeps were dispatched, and the African peasants were fined collectively or carried away and put to hard labour. The inhabitants of many a village fled from retaliation into the woods.

According to an official report published by the colonial administration on May 6, 1959, the events in March alone led to the arrest of 851 Africans, 245 of whom were released later, the rest were sent to trial. The death toll was said not to have reached more than fifty. Other sources reported that more than 50 people had been killed

<sup>1</sup> HASTINGS BANDA was staying in Southern Rhodesia at that time and was arrested there.

<sup>2</sup> H.M.S.O. Cmd. 707.

and hundreds wounded, including 23 soldiers and policemen. On a single occasion at Nkata Bay, where the troops fired into the crowd demanding the release of the arrested demonstrators, the bloodshed resulted in at least twenty deaths.

The colonial administration succeeded in restoring "law and order" by April, but the arrests and the police terror did not come to an end.

CHIUME, who at the time of the events had been abroad, started an international campaign for the termination of the state of emergency, the release of the arrested Africans and the dissolution of the Federation.

#### *The Devlin Report*

The British government appointed a four-member Commission under Justice PATRICK DEVLIN to investigate into the events of February–March 1959. The unanimous report of the Commission was presented in July 1959. It stated that the British government and the English settlers had been absolutely unjustified in assuming that the disturbances had been the result of subversion and a conspiracy to massacre white politicians. In the opinion of the Commission, the cause of the riots was to be found in the growing anger of the African masses over the abuses of authority and the police terror applied against the Africans, as well as in the fact that the British government had failed to respond to the request of the African National Congress for the elaboration of a new Constitution. At the same time the Commission, contradicting itself, found it warranted and inevitable in the given circumstances for the British Governor to have declared the state of emergency and deployed the police force against the demonstrators. The British government refused to accept the findings of the report as to the character and causes of the riots, but approved in entirety the section written in excuse of the Governor's action and the annex containing the Governor's note of self-justification.

#### *The Formation of the Malawi Congress Party. Struggle for the Release of H. Banda and Others*

After his release ORTON CHIRWA on September 30, 1959, founded a new political organization called the Malawi Congress Party, to reunite the adherents of the suppressed Congress. CHIRWA occupied the presidency of the party for the time being on the understanding that the ex-leaders of the Congress, as soon as they were set at liberty, would take over the direction of the party. In its programme issued with 300 signatures the new party demanded the immediate discharge of the arrested political leaders, as well as universal adult suffrage, and an elected African majority in the Legislative Assembly, and it took a stand against the MONCKTON report for the Commission's failure to take up the issue of secession from the Federation. Two days later the party had 2,000 paying members, and this figure rose to 15,000 by the end of November.

In December 1959 CHIRWA went to London to urge the release of the political leaders from arrest, the liquidation of the Federation, and the drafting of a new constitution for Nyasaland.

British Prime Minister MACMILLAN visited Nyasaland during his tour of Africa towards the end of January 1960. On arrival at the airport on January 25 he was received by a crowd of 300 demonstrators who clamorously demanded the release of



HASTINGS BANDA. The police dispersed the demonstrators and arrested one of them — a member of the Malawi Youth Association.

On January 26 the Mayor of Blantyre gave a dinner in honour of MACMILLAN. Around the hotel where the high guests were to meet, a crowd of nearly 300 Africans assembled and received the British Prime Minister with loud boos. About sixty people unfurled banners and posters inscribed with slogans demanding the release of BANDA and the dissolution of the Federation and decrying WELENSKY and the MONCKTON Commission.

The rest of the people expressed their views by shouting similar slogans and performing martial songs and war-dances. Upon instructions from European officers the police, after attacking the crowd with truncheons, arrested fifty demonstrators. The clash lasted all in all forty minutes and was stopped only by a sudden tropical cloudburst. Meanwhile, in the hotel restaurant, Prime Minister MACMILLAN proposed a toast to the great economic benefits which Nyasaland derived from the existence of the Federation.

After MACMILLAN's visit the colonial administration tried to calm down the Africans by releasing the arrested people. According to the official report made public on February 8, over 140 persons out of those arrested in the past few years had been released since January 1, and 227 were still in jail. Another official communiqué, dated March 10, spoke of the discharge of 40 Nyasaland political prisoners and put the number of those still under arrest at 181.

The African masses, however, could not be appeased. A contributing factor was that, in the first half of March, the Earl of HOME as Commonwealth Secretary met in a ten-day conference with two leaders of the Federation — Federal Prime Minister WELENSKY and Prime Minister WHITEHEAD of Southern Rhodesia. The latter threatened to take countermeasures (withdrawal of Southern Rhodesia from the Federation) in case the British government would make concessions to the Northern Rhodesia nationalists. As a result of these talks the Earl of HOME said in his statement on March 15 that Nyasaland was a backward territory, an African slum country, and its becoming independent was ruled out for long years to come. At the same time new arrests were made. On March 23, for instance, at Mlanje, a village situated about 40 miles from Blantyre, the police threw tear-gas bombs into a crowd, which was demonstrating for the release of thirteen Africans just arrested. The police put another six Africans under arrest and beat up four others.

*The Release of Hastings Banda. Banda's Talks with Macleod and His Propaganda Trip to London and New York*

On March 24, 1960, MACLEOD arrived in Blantyre, and on April 1 BANDA was set at liberty. He flew home from Gwelo in Southern Rhodesia where he had been detained, and on April 3 he conferred for one and a half hours with MACLEOD and the British Governor of Nyasaland. On April 7 he flew to London. On his way he made a visit to Tanganyika, where he had talks with JULIUS NYERERE. At the London airport he was received by a group of 70 African residents, who rendered him an enthusiastic ovation and voiced slogans demanding an end to Federation.

On April 8 BANDA gave a television interview in which he emphasized that his party wanted self-government for Nyasaland at once. At the same time he spoke appreciatively of MACLEOD, calling him "a great man, a good man, a Christian gentleman", "who understands our aspirations". On April 12 he spoke to a rally

arranged by Labour M.P. FENNER BROCKWAY and said among other things: "[Our] next hurdle is to break the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland . . . There can be no true self-government for Nyasaland within the Federation." He stressed at the same time that the European and Asiatic settlers might remain in Nyasaland even after accession to independence. He said: "I have nothing against them at all. We are not going to confiscate any property, personal or otherwise. We are not anti-European or anti-Asian, but we are anti-domination and on that there can be no compromise."

On April 14 MACLEOD reported to the British Parliament on his visit to Nyasaland. He expressed his conviction that the release of BANDA had lessened the tension in that territory. He announced that during summer a conference would meet in London to work out a democratic constitutional reform, which — unless new disturbances occurred — might be expected to produce results. He said also that most of the people still in detention would be released before the opening of the conference.

BANDA left London for New York, where he spoke about the racial policy of South Africa before 1,500 people assembled in the City Hall of New York on the occasion of African Freedom Day on April 14. BANDA described this policy as "the cancer of the world" which was spreading also to the Rhodesias, Nyasaland and the Congo, and which had to be extirpated by revolution. But this revolution, he added, should not necessarily be fought with machine guns. He criticized the United States for its supporting the South African economy by purchases of gold and diamonds, instead of applying economic pressure upon the government of South Africa.

A few days later, in an interview given to the *U.S. News and World Report* he reiterated that the European settlers might work unhampered even after independence and, while further European immigration would be barred, capital investment from abroad — even from the United States some time — would be welcome to Nyasaland. He said that in his opinion Communism had no ground in Africa, but he did not fail to add that, should the American capitalists refuse to provide economic, financial and technical assistance, the African countries would be compelled to turn towards the East. In the meantime the British administration of Nyasaland made it known on April 22 that since April 1 (the date of BANDA's release) 12 more Africans had been discharged and that still 130 persons were in custody.

In May BANDA left New York and returned to Nyasaland.

The constitutional conference that had been promised by MACLEOD was indeed convened for June 25. At first H. BANDA was against the conference, but MACLEOD managed to persuade him to attend. The conference met in an atmosphere that was far from auspicious. In the preceding weeks the country had been in a ferment of unrest. At the beginning of June the strike of six hundred bus drivers almost totally blocked the communication between the Eastern and Central provinces of the territory. On July 8 the arrest of an African at Cholo provoked a mass demonstration. The police dispersed the people with tear-gas bombs and arrested three Africans.

*The London Conference in July-August 1960*

The constitutional conference took place in London from July 25 to August 4, 1960. When arriving at London on July 14, H. BANDA said he came to achieve universal suffrage ("one man, one vote"), withdrawal from the Federation and independence at once. He spoke in the same aggressive tone also at the opening meeting of the conference, saying among other things:



"I think the time has come now, if not long ago already, for Nyasaland to be given a government representative of the people. This is the year 1960, not 1892... Nyasaland is an African state with an African majority, so she has to be governed by Africans."

BANDA sharply attacked also the chiefs present as members of the African delegation, and he charged that they were opposed to the majority will of the people. After this radical introduction the ten-day conference brought an unexpected result: MACLEOD had succeeded in disarming completely BANDA's vociferous "revolutionism". An agreement was reached concerning a new, provisional Constitution, but not a word was said about either independence or self-government.

Elections were held in two separate groups: one for African voters and one for the European and the Asiatic electorate. The voting right was granted to the African only if (1) he earned at least £120 a year or had £250 worth of landed property, and (2) he either spoke English well or was a regular taxpayer or the holder of any public office. In this way less than five per cent of the African population (about 100,000 persons) could go to the polls — for the most part well-to-do farmers and active or former civil servants, who voted for the candidates of the government. The new Constitution provided for a 33-member Legislative Assembly and a 10-member Executive Council. Twenty legislators were elected by the Africans and 8 by the Europeans, the remaining 5 members (among them 3 colonial officials) were appointed by the Governor, who was also empowered, if he saw fit in order to secure a majority, to appoint another two members. The Executive Council consisted of 5 elected and 5 appointed members; of the elected members 3 were African and 2 European; the 5 appointed members included 3 colonial officials. But the "Ministers" had only advisory functions, and the Governor continued presiding over the Council and was alone responsible for the administration of the territory.

BANDA and the other African participants of the conference willingly accepted this sham Constitution, and at the closing session BANDA even thanked MACLEOD for his understanding and assured him of his confidence;<sup>1</sup> MACLEOD in turn praised BANDA's flexible and sensible attitude.

As to the interests which the new "constitution" served, it is characteristic that the representative of WELENSKY's United Federal Party, attending the conference on behalf of the racist settlers, also expressed his total accord and promised his party's support, stating that the only point of disagreement between his party and the Africans was about how long the provisional constitution should remain in force.

#### *Nyasaland between the London Conference and the Elections of August 1961*

Two months after the London conference, on September 27, the colonial administration repealed some of the measures taken earlier in connection with the state of emergency, and released the Africans who had been under arrest yet. But the calling of the elections promised at the time of the London conference was delayed.

The Malawi Congress Party expressed the indignation and protest of the people of Nyasaland also by emphatically rejecting the meaningless report of the MONCKTON Commission published in October 1960. ALBERT MKADAWIRE, a member of the party

<sup>1</sup> Then and there BANDA read a telegram from the members of his party still in prison in Nyasaland, who thus made known their consent without knowledge of the details of the agreement.

and ardent follower of HASTINGS BANDA, told a press conference in London that it was clear to every adherent of democracy that there could be no democracy for Central Africa as long as the Federation existed. "If a constitution is wrong, as the Federal Constitution is," he said, "it is better to tear it to pieces and draw up a new one than to patch it up. We want a constitution which recognizes man as man, regardless of his origin, and gives rights to everyone, irrespective of his race."

On January 22, 1961, the Congress Party organized in Blantyre a mass demonstration of protest in which the people demanded the holding of elections. The mass of about 4,000 protesters was dispersed by the police using clubs and tear-gas grenades. Twenty Africans were injured and twelve demonstrators were arrested.

In April 1961 BANDA again went to London, where he said at a news conference on April 14 that he was willing to discuss a federation with Rhodesia on a new basis, but only after the dissolution of the existing Federation and Nyasaland's accession to independence. He stressed at the same time that the leaders of the African countries could not remain inactive when Africans were oppressed in the Rhodesias, South Africa and the Portuguese colonies.

On May 12, 1961, the administration had the Legislative Council pass three new bills, which — with the motivation that the state of emergency would soon be terminated — empowered the Governor to take the necessary measures of his own choice, after the state of emergency was ended, for the maintenance of internal order and for the security of strategic areas.

In the meantime the elections had been scheduled for August.

On May 30 the Malawi Congress Party made public the list of its candidates for election. On this occasion HASTINGS BANDA spoke before 10,000 people. He stressed that Nyasaland would have to withdraw from the Federation in three months from the date of election and become an independent state as Malawi. He said:

"We have to break up this stupid Federation. We have to secede immediately and be granted self-government. I have no objection to Europeans and Asians who realize that this country is ours. If they do so, we shall regard them as friends, otherwise they should pack up and leave this country, we want to be our own masters."

#### *The August 1961 Elections*

In accordance with the agreement made at the London conference the elections were held in mid-August 1961. Of the more than three million inhabitants of the territory, about 110,000 had the right to vote. The votes were cast separately by the Africans (only 80,000 out of 106,000 qualified voters went to the poll to elect 20 representatives) and by the Europeans and Indians (4,000 voters having the higher qualifications elected 9 representatives). BANDA's Malawi Congress Party won a sweeping victory: 99 per cent of the African electorate voted for the party, which thus gained all 20 African seats, and even three of the eight seats reserved for Europeans and Asiatics. In the new legislature thus 23 seats were held by BANDA's party, 5 went to WELENSKY's United Federal Party, and 5 representatives were colonial officials appointed by the Governor.

H. BANDA and four other members of the Legislative Assembly were appointed also to the Executive Council. BANDA became Minister of Natural Resources and Local Government.

After the elections BANDA gave a press conference. He said that the Europeans who refused to recognize the right of Africans to govern their country might pack up



and go home, for there was no place for them in Nyasaland. He added that the Africans did not hate the Europeans but they did hate to be dominated by others. He said he was by no means willing to reconcile himself to the Central African Federation; therefore, if the Europeans wanted to maintain it, they had better proclaim the state of emergency and fling him in prison again.

#### *The Fight of Hastings Banda for Withdrawal from Federation*

In February 1962 British Commonwealth Secretary SANDYS was on a visit to the Central African Federation and conferred also with BANDA. He tried to persuade BANDA to give up his intention of withdrawing from the Federation. But BANDA was adamant. The day following his meeting with SANDYS he said to newsmen that the Malawi Congress Party was not inclined to accept federal ties with the Rhodesias in any form whatever.

On March 1 he said still more firmly in an interview that the Federation was dead, and that was clear to everybody; that WELENSKY was only bluffing, since he also well knew that the African population of Nyasaland was opposed to co-operation with the federal government, which in this case could not rule over Nyasaland except by the use of force.

In the middle of May British Home Secretary BUTLER — who was at the same time Minister in charge of the Central African Office — went to visit the Federation. In his talks with BANDA at Zomba he recognized in principle the right of Nyasaland to quit the Federation, but no official communiqué was issued on the negotiations.

At the end of July BANDA went to London to obtain the British government's formal assent to the earliest possible secession of Nyasaland from the Central African Federation. This time he scored some results during his two-days' talks with BUTLER. The British Minister was still reluctant to start concrete negotiations about withdrawal and gave as a reason for the delay that first an inquiry must find out what economic consequences were to be expected, yet the British government itself announced officially that a constitutional conference on Nyasaland would open in London in November 1962. The commission of inquiry set up by BUTLER got down to work in Nyasaland still in the course of July.

In the second half of 1962 the Legislative Council and the Executive Council controlled by the Malawi Congress Party carried out a number of reforms to promote the cause of independence. Thus, among other things, they considerably curtailed the powers of the two most important local authorities of the colonial administration — the District Commissioners and the chiefs — by delegating more and more functions to committees composed of persons familiar with the local conditions, customs and traditions. Of no minor importance was the arrangement by which the division of towns into separate African and European areas was terminated.

#### *Constitutional Conference in November 1962 and the London "Constitution"*

The constitutional conference was held in London between November 12 and 24, 1962. The negotiators arrived at an agreement, under which Nyasaland was to obtain self-government on February 3, 1963. Later, at an unspecified date, it would win independence and thus have the right to withdraw from the Federation.

The instrument worked out for self-government for Nyasaland was really a sham constitution. True, the existing Executive Council was to be replaced by a ministerial government headed by BANDA as Prime Minister, but the new Constitution enlarged the Governor's powers instead of cutting them down:

(1) The office of Finance Minister remained in the charge of a colonial official appointed by the Governor, who was entitled to ignore the government's advice regarding the questions of financial and economic stability, and to see to it that the British-dictated terms of the provision of assistance were enforced.

(2) The Governor continued to have operative control over the police and to apply measures at discretion for the sake of order and public security.

(3) The Governor was empowered to veto measures which in his view were detrimental to foreign (British) civil servants, and to take steps to create appropriate conditions for them.

(4) The Governor obtained the right to invest himself with exceptional powers at discretion.

BANDA emphasized that Britain and Nyasaland would in the future talk to each other as friends and said that he wanted the British civil servants to stay in the country, because the Africanization of the civil service should not take place to the detriment of efficiency.

Returning home from the London conference on December 3, BANDA was received at the Blantyre airport by a hundred thousand people. He spoke briefly and said that the country would belong to the Africans but the Africans should regard the resident Europeans and Asians as friends.

#### *The Struggle of the Settlers and the British Conservative Party against Nyasaland's Withdrawal*

WELENSKY and the like-minded Rhodesia settlers, however, found even this rather limited self-government too much. In a radio address at Salisbury on November 28 WELENSKY said that Nyasaland had no right to quit the Federation, and the British government had no right to consent to such a step, since the future of the Federation could be decided only by a common agreement of all interested governments (namely the British, the Federal, the two Rhodesian and the Nyasaland governments).

An even stormier protest was raised by the Rhodesia settlers — and some members of the British Conservative Party — when BUTLER officially told the House of Commons on December 19 that the British government recognized the right of Nyasaland to leave the Federation. Prime Minister WELENSKY called a special meeting of the Federal Parliament. In an hour-long speech he described the British government's step as "betrayal" and urged the settlers to start a fight against the decision of London.

The British government was blamed for this action by the extremist wing of the Conservative Party holding the majority in both Houses of Parliament. The Marquis of SALISBURY, for example, in a speech in the House of Lords, charged that the government had broken "its word to its own kith and kin".

On December 20 BANDA, to quench the indignation of the settlers, told a leader of the settler opposition, MICHAEL BLACKWOOD, that after Nyasaland's withdrawal from the Federation there might be talks about the newly independent country establishing ties with the Rhodesias in some form to be agreed upon later.



### *Self-government for Nyasaland*

In the last days of January 1963, during his tour of South East Africa, BUTLER visited Nyasaland to talk over the introduction of self-government with BANDA. Following these talks, on February 1, at a meeting of the legislature attended by 250 invited guests, Sir GLYN S. JONES, a former Governor of Nyasaland, handed the instruments of power to Prime Minister BANDA, who had previously been sworn in together with the other members of his government. It is worth mentioning that among the 250 invited guests there were more than 50 Americans (the U.S. Consul, the entire staff of the United States Information Service and of the so-called International Development Agency, as well as forty-two members of the "Peace Corps" dispatched to Nyasaland recently from the United States).

After taking the oath, BANDA delivered a speech in which he emphasized that all Europeans desirous of living and working in Nyasaland under the African majority-government would be welcome, but advised those who held to "white superiority" to get out of the country. The ceremony was attended also by the leader of the independence movement of Southern Rhodesia, JOSHUA NKOMO, and the leader of the Northern Rhodesia movement, KENNETH D. KAUNDA. Turning to them, HASTINGS BANDA said: "The freedom and independence of our country are not complete until Northern and Southern Rhodesia have been liberated," and expressed the hope that the other two territories would in the near future attain through peaceful, constitutional channels what Nyasaland had just won.

Two days later, at a meeting of the Malawi Congress Party in Limba, BANDA again spoke and stated that Nyasaland by winning self-government had essentially left the "stupid federation" already. He stressed that now everyone in the country had to work hard and produce more than before, because Nyasaland, being in a difficult financial situation, had to create the necessary material means by tilling the land.

By obtaining self-government Nyasaland took the first step towards independence, but the granting of full independence was still delayed. Having been compelled to assent to the granting of self-government, the British did all they could to delay the country's accession to independence as long as possible. False rumours were spread through the press about alleged unlawful practices and acts of violence taking place in the country. In a big rally held at Zomba on July 9, Prime Minister BANDA qualified these rumours as slanders spread with the purpose of creating a pretext for delaying the granting of independence further: "If anybody, either here or in London, tries under any pretext to delay our independence, we shall proclaim our country an independent state, no matter what consequences might ensue financially, economically, militarily or internationally."

### *Negotiations in London in September 1963 on the Granting of Independence to Nyasaland*

After long procrastination it came at last to negotiations, which took place in London from September 23 till 26. BANDA held the position that the country should be granted independence at the same time as the Federation would be dissolved, that is on December 31, 1963. The negotiations ended in a compromise. It was agreed that Nyasaland would accede to independence on July 6, 1964, after the Nyasaland Constitution (which was to be submitted for approval to the British government) had

been worked out and the two governments had discussed the financial and economic measures to be taken in connection with accession to independence. On September 26 the Central African Office of the United Kingdom made public the communiqué on the agreement.

On November 16 the BANDA government announced that the general elections to the first Parliament of independent Nyasaland (the state of Malawi to be formed on July 6) would take place in May 1964.

### *Independent Nyasaland*

After the dissolution of the Central African Federation had been proclaimed, a day of rejoicing was celebrated under the auspices of BANDA at Limbe on January 1. The people assembled on the occasion burnt a coffin representing "Welensky's Federation".

At the parliamentary elections in April 1964 all fifty candidates of BANDA's Malawi Congress Party were elected unopposed, just as the settlers' candidates were elected to the seats reserved for Europeans.

On July 6, 1964, Nyasaland was proclaimed the independent state of Malawi in the framework of a grandiose festivity in the Blantyre stadium in the presence of 40,000 people and representatives of 80 foreign states. BANDA delivered the festive address, in which he emphasized:

"Europeans can no longer rule over us, so there is no reason for friction between us and the Europeans." At the same time he warned the British government that if Southern Rhodesia acceded to independence under a government representing the white minority, there would be "trouble".

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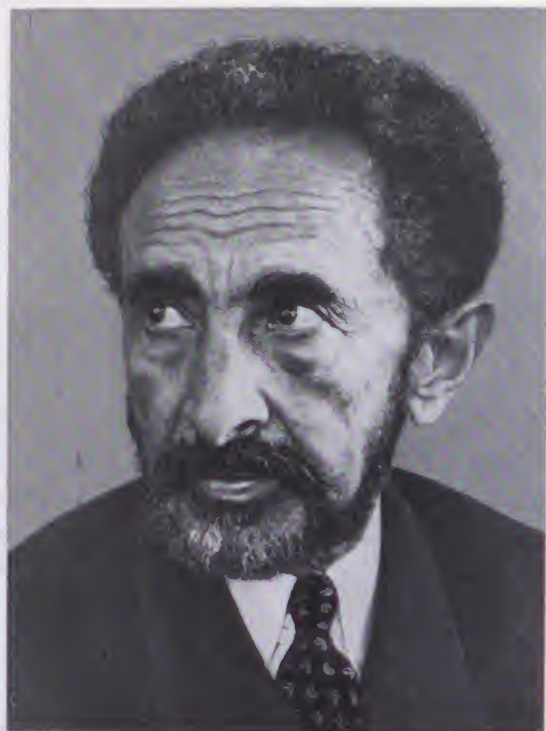


1. Yussuf Dadoo



2. Félix Éboué





3. *Haile Selassie*



4. *Atrocities of the Italian fascists  
in Somaliland and Eritrea*



5-6. *Atrocities of the Italian fascists in Somaliland and Eritrea*





7. African conference for peace and security (Accra, 1960)



8. Conference of African states at Casablanca in 1961



9. Kwame Nkrumah



10. Nnamdi Azikiwe





11. Obafemi Awolowo



12. Seretse Khama



13. Kenneth Kaunda



14. Hastings Banda